ACROSS / A20

Atienza won't allow logging's return to Samar

WORLD/ A28

Bangladesh cyclone death toll reaches 2,000

SPORTS / A31

Federer wins fourth Masters Cup crown

BUSINESS / B2-2

Geologists, mining eng'rs leaving RP

METRO / A25

Marathon man dies before crossing finish line

Gov'ts, traders told: Get ready for one Asean market

SINGAPORE—SOUTHEAST ASIAN BUSINESSES and governments must accelerate efforts to fuse into an EU-style single market by 2015 or risk losing out to China and India, several of the region's trade ministers said on Sunday.

"If we cannot start to really integrate ourselves faster we would see our competitive-

GOV'TS/ A6

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Monday, November 19, 2007 ★★ 14 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 344 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

'Eavesdroppers' stalk media at coup hearing

By Nikko Dizon

THEY CAME COMplete with ball pens, sheets of paper and even a video camera. But the one holding the camera

EAVESDROPPERS'/ A18

WAG NA KAYO MAGBANTAY. BILI NA LANG KAYO NG INQUIRER!

SPEAKER Jose de Venecia bids President Arroyo good luck before her departure at the Naia for the Asean summit in Singapore. ERIK ARAZAS

GMA, Burma PM meet before summit

By Norman Bordadora

SINGAPORE (VIA PLDT)—President Macapagal-Arroyo kicks off a series of one-on-one talks with Asian leaders today with a meeting with Prime Minister Thein Sein of Burma (Myanmar)—two leaders whose governments have come under international scrutiny over allegations of human rights abuses.

Ms Arroyo flew into Singapore yesterday afternoon to attend Tuesday's summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean), to be followed by a tête-à-tête with the leaders of China, Japan, South Korea, India, Australia and New Zealand in the so-called East Asia Summit either later on Tuesday or on Wednesday.

Asean is under pressure to rein in its most troublesome member, Burma, whose deadly suppression of prodemocracy protests has cast a shadow over Asean's 40th anniversary summit.

Asean ministers and officials held meetings under tight security yesterday ahead of the summit at which the leaders will sign a landmark Asean charter and a blueprint for the creation of a free trade zone by 2015.

The Burmese Embassy in Singapore confirmed the bilateral meeting between Ms Arroyo and Thein Sein, but no agenda for discussion was released.

Ms Arroyo in September called on the Burmese junta to release opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi, who has been under house arrest for years, as well as scores of Buddhist monks detained after a series of protests.

The Philippines itself has not been spared international criticism for alleged human rights violations by some elements of its security forces, who have been suspected of involvement in the deaths of hundreds of political militants since Ms Arroyo took office in 2001.

In a departure statement in Manila, Ms Arroyo said she was attending the Asian leaders' meetings with the interest of Filipinos on top of her agenda.

"The interests of the people of the Philippines come first.

GMA/ A6

Blaming Abus was convenient for probers

By Amando Doronila

ANALYSIS

FOUR DAYS AFTER THE BOMBing of the Batasan, the Philippine National Police declared the case "solved but not closed." This followed a police raid in Payatas, Quezon City, on Thursday during which three alleged Abu Sayyaf members were killed.

The solution was the swiftest in the campaign against terrorists.

Police were led to Payatas by evidence based on a motorcycle parked at the south wing of the Batasan complex at the time of the explosion. They traced the ownership of the motorcycle to a Payatas resident.

The bomb that killed Basilan Rep. Wahab Akbar, 47, was detonated through a remote control device by persons who were near the motorcycle, police said.

Police said the raid was a break in the investigation and led to further evidence that established a "strong link" between the blast and three suspects killed in the Payatas raid and three others who were arrested.

They said a gunfight broke out when a PNP and military team was trying to serve a warrant of arrest against a certain Pakid Said, identified as an Abu Sayyaf member. Two other suspects were killed while resisting arrest. Police said the raid was

BLAMING/ A17

Palace official clears Akbar's political foe

Cops to file murder raps vs 3 suspects

By Nikko Dizon, Jeannette I. Andrade and Christine O. Avendaño

THREE ALLEGED ABU SAYYAF MEMBERS FACE murder charges today in connection with the bombing at the Batasang Pambansa complex that killed Basilan Rep. Wahab Akbar and three others, but a top Malacañang official all but cleared Akbar's political rival, Gerry Salapuddin, in the attack.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita yesterday described Salapuddin, a former Moro National Liberation Front guerrilla, as a "very honorable man."

"He is a former MNLF commander, but as to whether he has that psyche of doing that … I don't think that he would do that," Ermita said, referring to the Batasan bombing.

"We will file four counts of murder and multiple serious physical injuries against the suspects," National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) Director Geary Barias said in a phone interview yesterday.

The suspects—Ikram Indama, Kaidar Awnal and Adham Kusain—were arrested in a raid in Barangay Payatas on Nov. 15, two days after the deadly bombing at the House of Representatives in Quezon City.

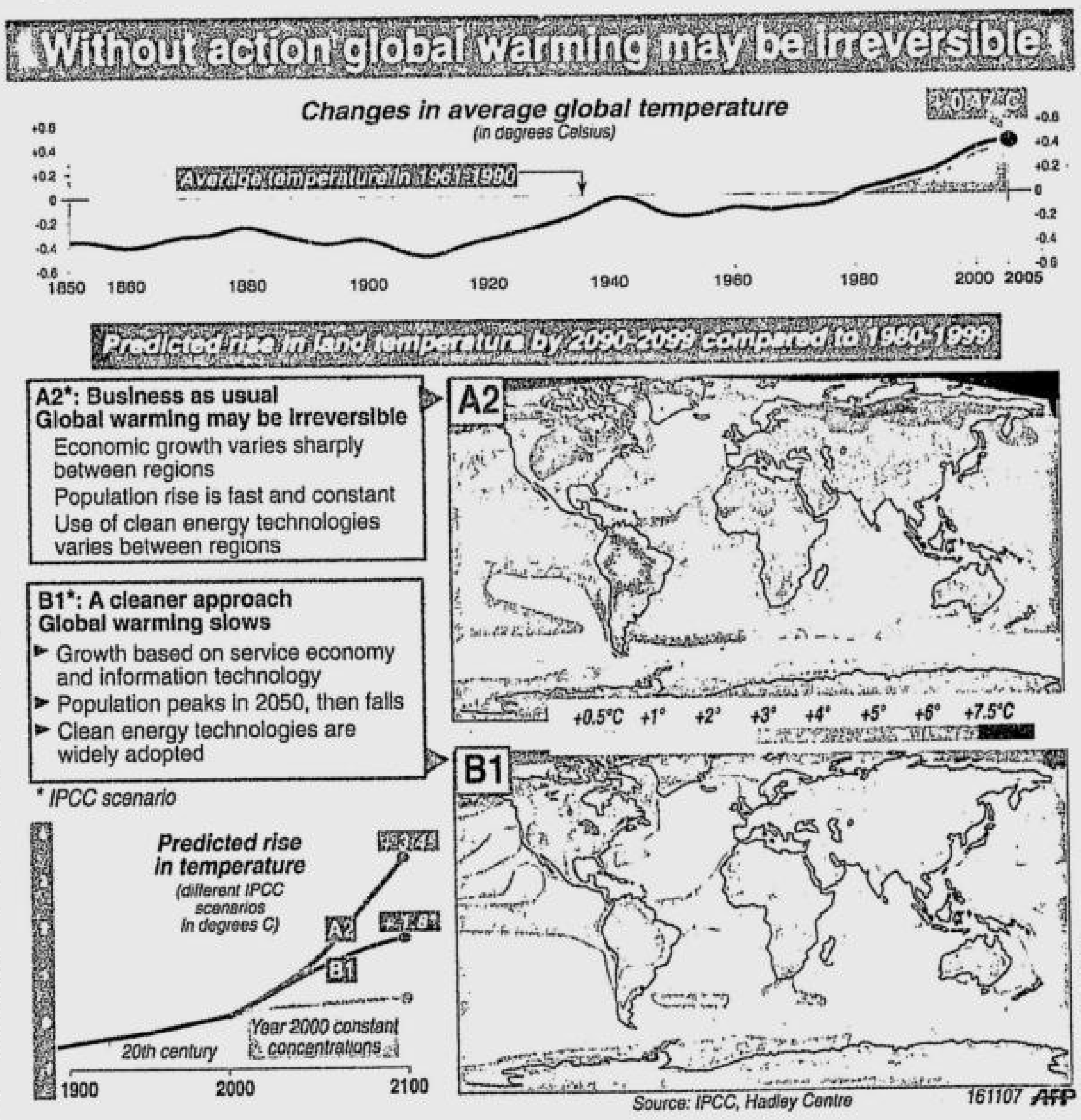
Three others—Abu Jandal, Redwan Indama and his wife Saing—were killed in the gun battle that erupted after authorities tried to serve an arrest warrant on Jandal, an alleged Abu Sayyaf member who was wanted for kidnapping.

Barias said police were still discussing whether to file the case in the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office or the Department of Justice.

Salapuddin has denied in-

PALACE/ A18

Without action global warming may be irreversible



A2*: Business as usual
Global warming may be irreversible
Economic growth varies sharply between regions
Population rise is fast and constant
Use of clean energy technologies varies between regions

B1*: A cleaner approach
Global warming slows
- Growth based on service economy and information technology
- Population peaks in 2050, then falls
- Clean energy technologies are widely adopted

* IPCC scenario

Source: IPCC, Hadley Centre 161107 AFP

Life just too cruel for Conde

By Charles E. Buban

IN WHAT WAS TO BE HIS last hours as a maltreated working horse, Conde finally found a way to get even with his cruel master: The 16-year-old horse collapsed in front of the INQUIRER office on Chino Roces Avenue in Makati City and found the attention he probably never received in his entire life.

The sight of Conde being forced by his owner to get up was unbearable as a number of INQUIRER employ-

LIFE JUST/ A19

RAFFY LERMA

DEAD END. Conde, a horse believed to have been ill-treated by his owner, collapses in front of the INQUIRER office on Chino Roces Avenue.

Environmentalists want more Asian action on global warming

SINGAPORE—ENVIRONMENTAL groups are stepping up the pressure on Asian nations to do more to fight global warming ahead of a key climate conference next month, calling their pledges so far nothing but empty promises.

Leaders of 16 countries meeting in Singapore this week have agreed to increase the region's forest cover, promote the use of clean energy sources and protect marine ecosystems.

But activists say the draft declarations from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) and the wider East Asia grouping, including China and India, do not go far enough.

"We want to see a more proactive stance from both Asean and the East Asia Summit," Rafael Senga, the Asia-Pacific energy coordinator for the World Wildlife Fund, told Agence France Presse.

Senga described as "empty rhetoric" the draft Asean documents. "After making statements at the summits, nothing happens after that," he said.

Athena Ballesteros, a climate campaigner with environmental watchdog Greenpeace, singled out leaders of the 10-nation Asean bloc for particular scorn.

"Outrageously, if this docu-

ENVIRONMENTALISTS/ A8

Libre turns 6; family, lifestyle news up

EXPECT MORE LIFESTYLE news that will help readers decide where, when and how to make time for family bonding as INQUIRER LIBRE enters its seventh year as the first and longest-running free daily Filipino newspaper in the country.

INQUIRER president and CEO Alexandra Prieto-Romualdez said plans were being drawn for LIBRE to focus on stories that would give readers more ideas on how to spend time with the family based on different needs and budgets.

"We want more features and

LIBRE/ A8

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Visayas and Mindanao will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming widespread rains over the eastern sections of Visayas and Mindanao which may trigger flashfloods and landslides. Southern Luzon will have mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

Metro Manila	Mostly Cloudy	**Iloilo/Bacolod**	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	**Roxas**	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	**Cebu**	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	**Tacloban**	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	**Gen. Santos**	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Mostly Cloudy	**Zamboanga**	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Mostly Cloudy	**Cagayan de Oro**	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Mostly Cloudy	**Davao**	Cloudy with Rains

COMPILED BY: RHEA BLANCAS, PDI RESEARCH/11/18/07 SOURCE: PAGASA

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(In exact order)

Mid-Day **SUERTRES** Evening

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SUPERLOTTO 6/49

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Palace assures Moros on pacts

'Agreement on territory with MILF won't violate peace accord with MNLF'

By Christine O. Avendaño

MALACAÑANG YESTERDAY assured the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) that the government would not violate the peace pact it had signed with the group in its ongoing discussions with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) on a new Muslim homeland.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita acknowledged that it was understandable for the MNLF, especially its chair Nur Misuari, to express concern in the matter of the Muslim territory that was agreed upon in principle between the government and the MILF in the recent exploratory talks in Malaysia.

The MNLF had protested the agreement between the government and the MILF signed in Kuala Lumpur last week defining the borders of a new Muslim homeland, saying it violated the 1996 peace pact with the MNLF.

Ermita said Misuari was trying to say "he could not imagine how any agreement could be had with the MILF without considering very closely the 1996 GRP-MNLF agreement."

"Now on our part, as far as the government is concerned, the term of reference for any negotiations, especially now between the GRP and MILF, should be our Constitution and, of course, the 1996 agreement which is now embodied in a law which is 9054," he told reporters at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport where he led the send-off for President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Ermita made it clear that, "If at all there is an expanded area.. then we should take a look at the areas being considered in this negotiation and then, of course, we have to go back to 9054 and, of course, to follow our Constitution."

He said what the MILF wanted was a further expansion of the present area of autonomy but that this would be done through the Constitutional process.

"There's got to be no violation whatsoever and for that matter remember last week the GRP panel went to Jeddah to attend the tripartite meeting with the MNLF and OIC (Organization of the Islamic Conference), the more reason the agreement of 1996 is being firmed up and, therefore, there's reason for the MNLF to be sure that whatever agreement we will have with the MILF should hew closely to the 1996 agreement," he said.

WHAT'S INSIDE

PSE WINS CASE vs 15 former employees /A4

MORE FORMER Pinoys reacquiring citizenship /A10

Gov't suspends car imports at Subic

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—THE IMPORTATION of used motor vehicles through the Subic Bay Freeport has been suspended for six months to allow government agencies to audit companies there and determine the extent of vehicle smuggling as well as collect the proper taxes for the government.

The auditing team is composed of representatives from the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, Department of Trade and Industry, Department of Finance and Bureau of Customs.

The moratorium on import permits was also extended to two oil companies—PTT and Tri-Solid—until the firms paid the correct excise taxes, Subic customs collector Marietta Zamoranos and SBMA Administrator Armand Arreza said in separate phone interviews on Friday.

Customs Commissioner Napoleon Morales confirmed the information given by an INQUIRER source that the audit of the two oil firms was ordered by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"The audit is one of the action plans we are doing for revenue generation. It is an alternative remedial measure to get the assigned collection target. The President is aware of this and she said, 'Good. Do it,'" Morales said in a telephone interview.

The INQUIRER source, who sought anonymity for lack of authority to speak, said the audit ordered by Ms Arroyo did not only seek a review of all oil and used vehicle imports but an "investigation of all transshipments of cigarettes and liquor at the free port."

Zamoranos said the review of the two oil companies was finished last Friday.

The inventory of the vehicles stored at the free port was "still ongoing," Zamoranos said.

"All car importers are being made to liquidate their import documents. Everybody has to," she said, referring to at least 20 companies.

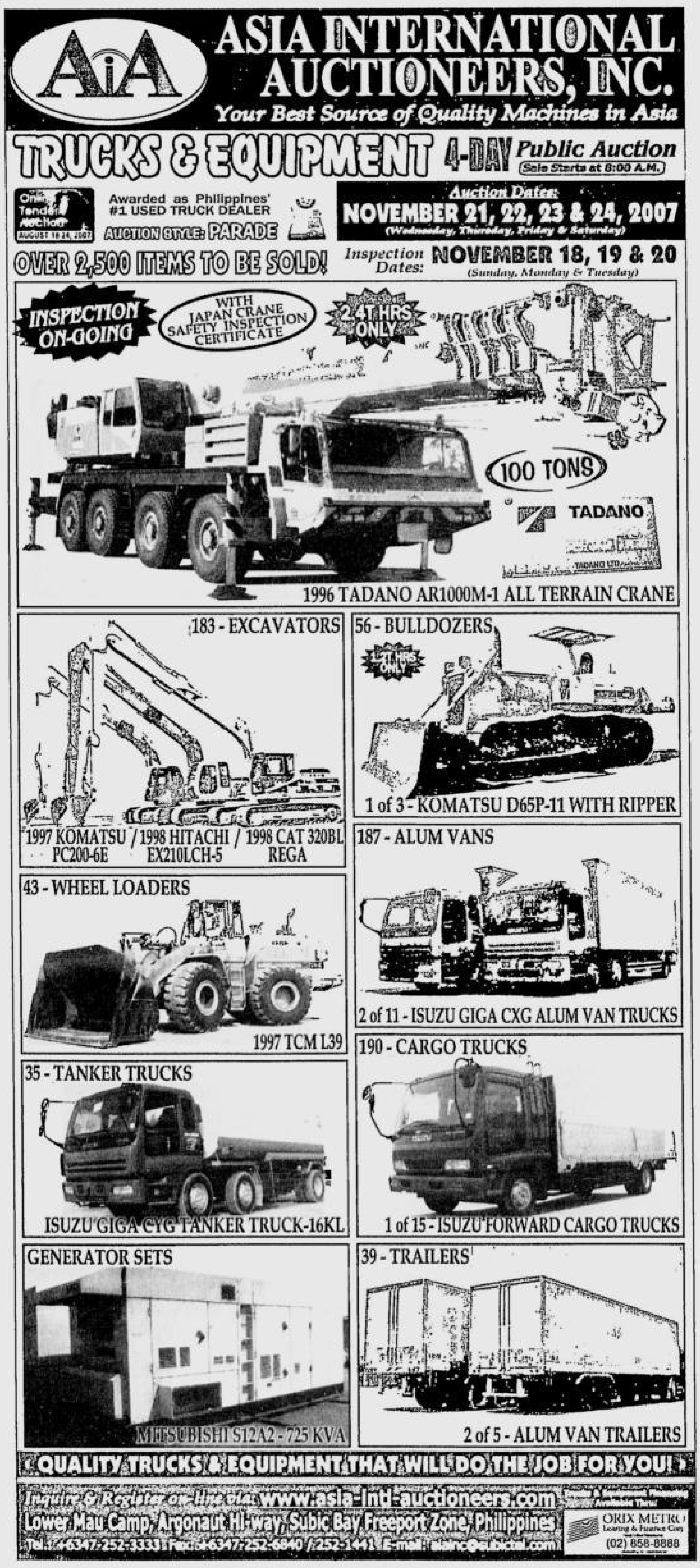
Senate to probe peso's rise

THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON economic affairs will look into the peso's steep ascent and assess the strong currency's impact on Filipinos, particularly exporters, call center operators and overseas workers.

Committee chair Sen. Loren Legarda said the peso's rise had become critical, especially after the Social Weather Stations (SWS) released a survey showing that at least five million Filipinos have been adversely affected by the peso's surge against the greenback.

"While a strong peso benefits the economy, there is also a need to look into the legitimate concerns on the effects of the surging peso to the overall performance of the financial market," Legarda said.

Sen. Mar Roxas said a strong currency would hurt three key economic sectors that have been driving the country's economic growth in the past three years: Overseas Filipino workers would get fewer pesos for their dollars, exporters would earn less from their sales, and business process outsourcing operators would have to spend more dollars on their operations here. *Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*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RP to send medical team to Bangladesh

THE PHILIPPINES WILL SEND A MEDical team to Bangladesh to help relief efforts after a powerful cyclone killed more than 1,800 people in that country, a presidential aide said on Sunday.

President Macapagal-Arroyo extended her "deepest sympathy and compassion to the people of Bangladesh" and ordered Health Secretary Francisco Duque to form the medical team, said Cerge Remonde, chief of the Presidential Management Staff.

Duque said the team—which would likely include five doctors, four nurses and a psychiatrist—could leave as early as Wednesday.

Bangladeshi officials said more than 1,800 people had died and the toll was likely to rise after Cyclone Sidr, carrying winds of up to 240 kilometers per hour, smashed tens of thousands of homes Thursday in the country's southwest and ruined crops just before the harvest season.

The Philippines, which is geographically in the path of many powerful typhoons in the Pacific Ocean, has had its share of devastation wrought by cyclones.

In December 2006, more than 1,000 people were killed or went missing after the Bicol region was struck by a typhoon and torrential rains that unleashed mudslides and volcanic debris that wiped out entire villages.

Today the entire village of Guinsagon in Sorsogon province lies under the mud that rolled down the mountains and buried more 1,000 local residents and visitors. *AP*

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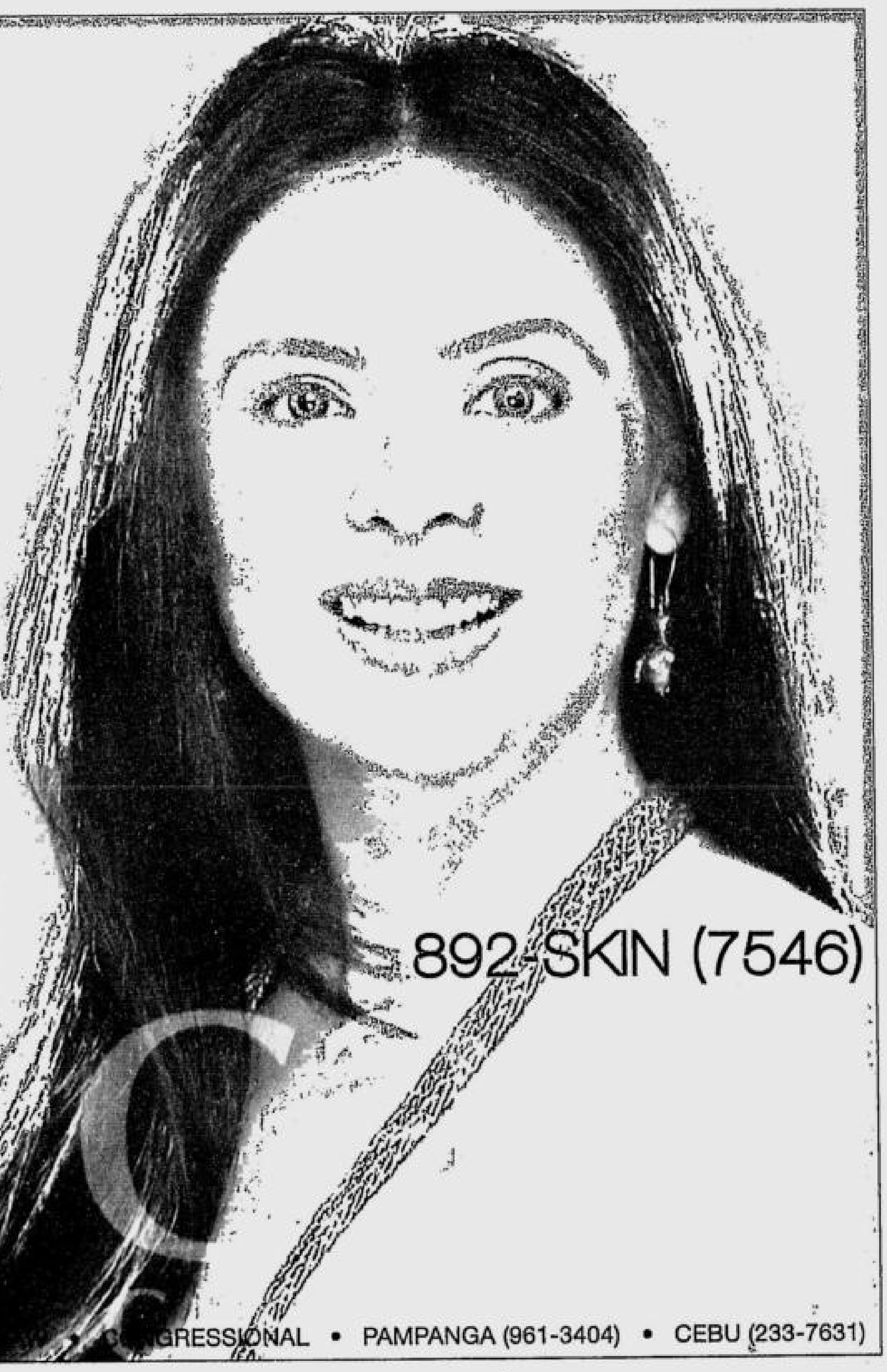

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Stock exchange wins case vs former employees

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE Inc. has won the labor case filed against it by its employees whose services were terminated after the bourse reorganized itself into a profit-oriented entity in order to become more competitive and profitable.

The Court of Appeals upheld the ruling of the National Labor Relations Commission that found nothing irregular in the termination of 15 PSE employees who had charged that they were illegally dismissed and had sought reinstatement or compensation.

The employees initially won their case before the labor arbiter, who awarded them nearly P18 million in back wages, damages and 14th- to 16th-month pay, but the decision was reversed by the NLRC, prompting the employees to take the case to the Court of Appeals.

Named respondents were PSE president Francisco Ed Lim, senior vice president Jurisita Quintos, human resources management department head Alfredo Jingco and its board of directors.

In taking the case to the appellate court, the PSE employees said they were offered special separation packages, but had reservations about it. They said they expressed their right to additional monetary benefits and asked the PSE for more details about the reorganization.

But they said their concerns, through a letter, angered the PSE president. The employees were given 24 hours to sign a uniform letter of intent availing themselves of the special separation package. They said they were compelled to sign to avoid the risk of losing the special package should they be terminated.

The employees said there was bad faith on the PSE's part because some of the letters of intent stated that the employees had voluntarily chosen the special package, while other letters stated that their separation was brought about by the reorganization of the PSE. They also said new employees were hired at much higher salaries to replace them.

The PSE contended its reorganization was valid and done in good faith. It said that to improve its performance since it had been lagging behind other stock exchanges, it had to abolish certain offices.

It said it issued 30-day termination notices and informed the Department of Labor and Employment and the workers of the termination of employment relations.

In siding with the PSE, the appellate court said it was the bourse's prerogative to reorganize itself and to abolish or merge some functions that may entail reducing its workforce.

"The PSE is now a for-profit company, and to advance its own interest it is not precluded from determining what measures it can adopt for economy and efficiency's sake," it said.

As for the new hires with higher salaries, the appellate court said they had more duties than the former employees, which was why their salaries were commensurate with their responsibilities.

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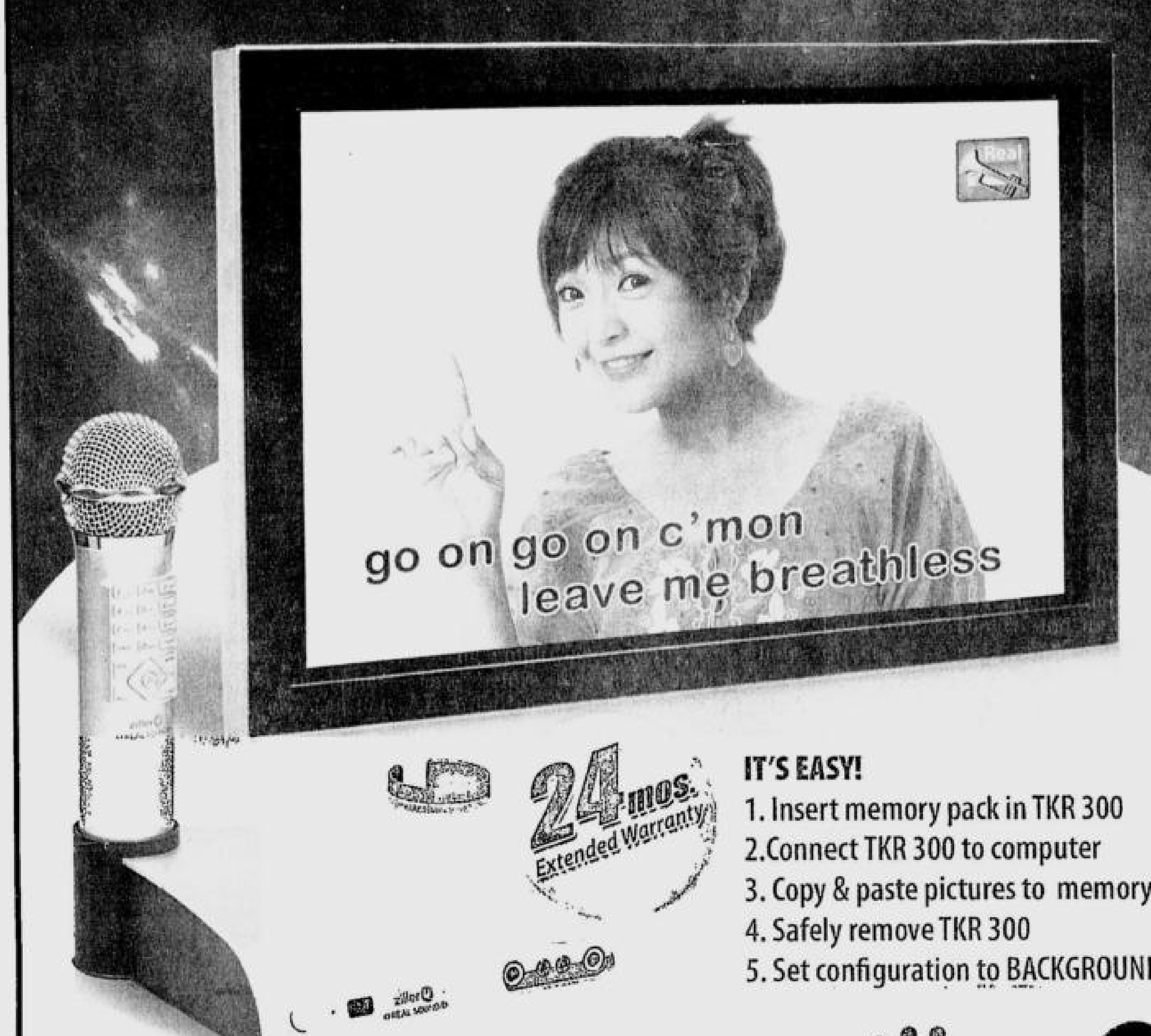

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, November 19, 2007
33rd Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: 1 Mac 1:10-15, 41-43, 54-57, 62-63
Gospel: Luke 18:35-43

When Jesus drew near to Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the road, begging. As he heard the crowd passing by, he inquired what it was, and they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was going by. Then he cried out, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" The people in front scolded him, "Be quiet!" but he cried out all the more, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

Jesus stopped and ordered the blind man to be brought to him, and when he came near, he asked him, "What do you want me to do for you?" And the man said, "Lord, that I may see!" Jesus said, "Receive your sight, your faith has saved you." At once the blind man was able to see, and he followed Jesus, giving praise to God. And all the people who were there also praised God.

Commentary

There arises an evil king and many of the people of Israel become ashamed of who they are and their heritage of the covenant, and they begin to practice the customs of the Greeks. Then the king demands that they abandon their ways and their religion. The law is destroyed, the altars profaned, and those who remained obedient are killed, and many die. This is the short story of a long time of horror. We barely know what persecution means—are we faithful or are we seduced by whatever new way or fad comes along?

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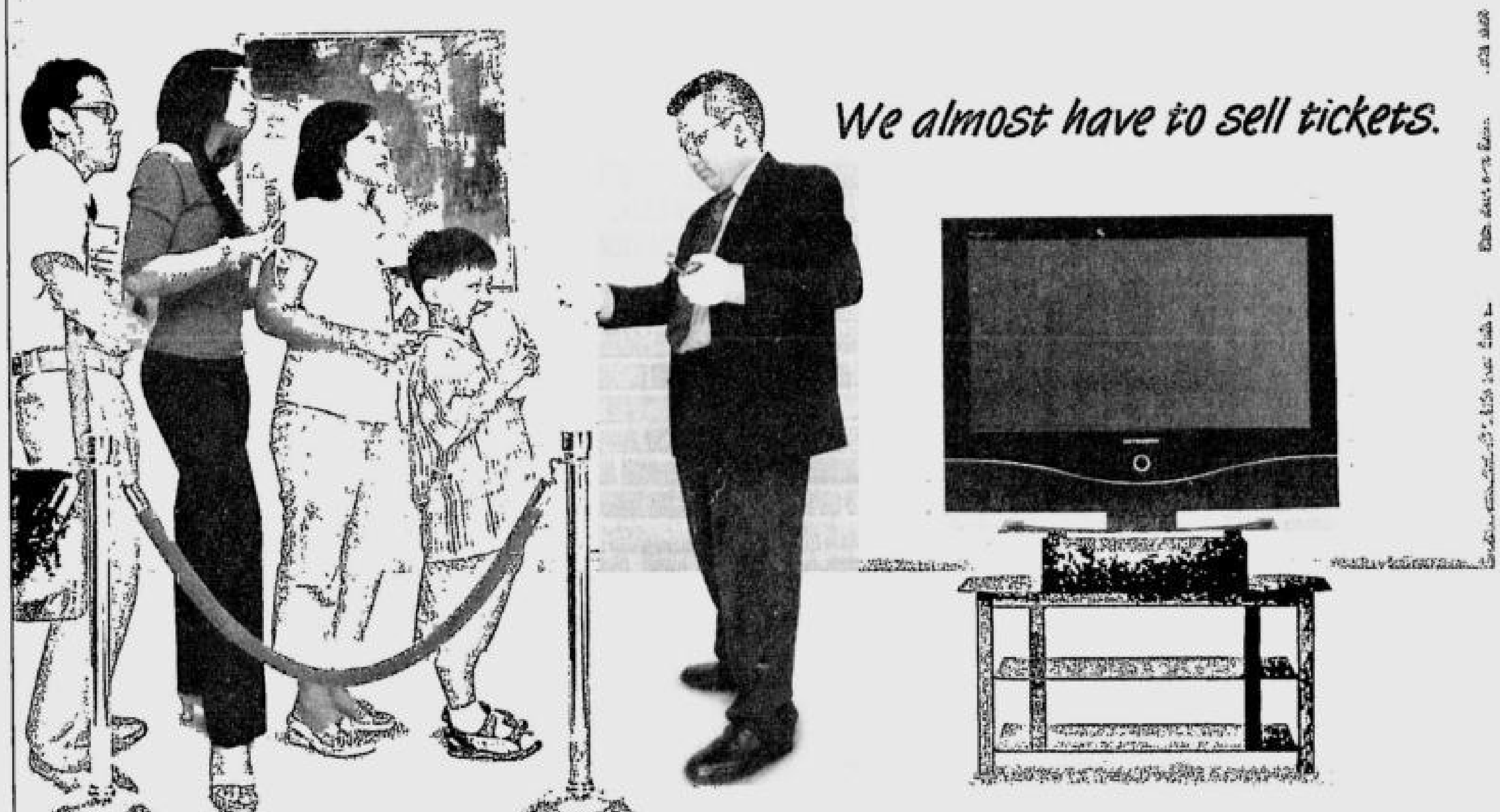
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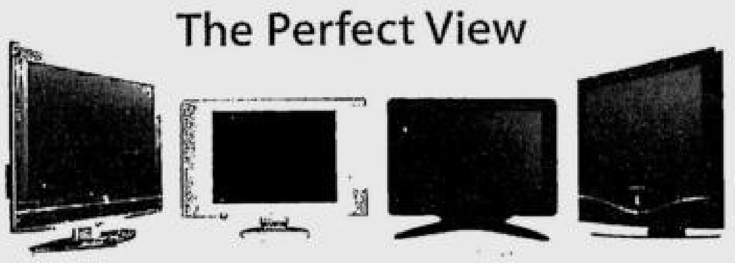

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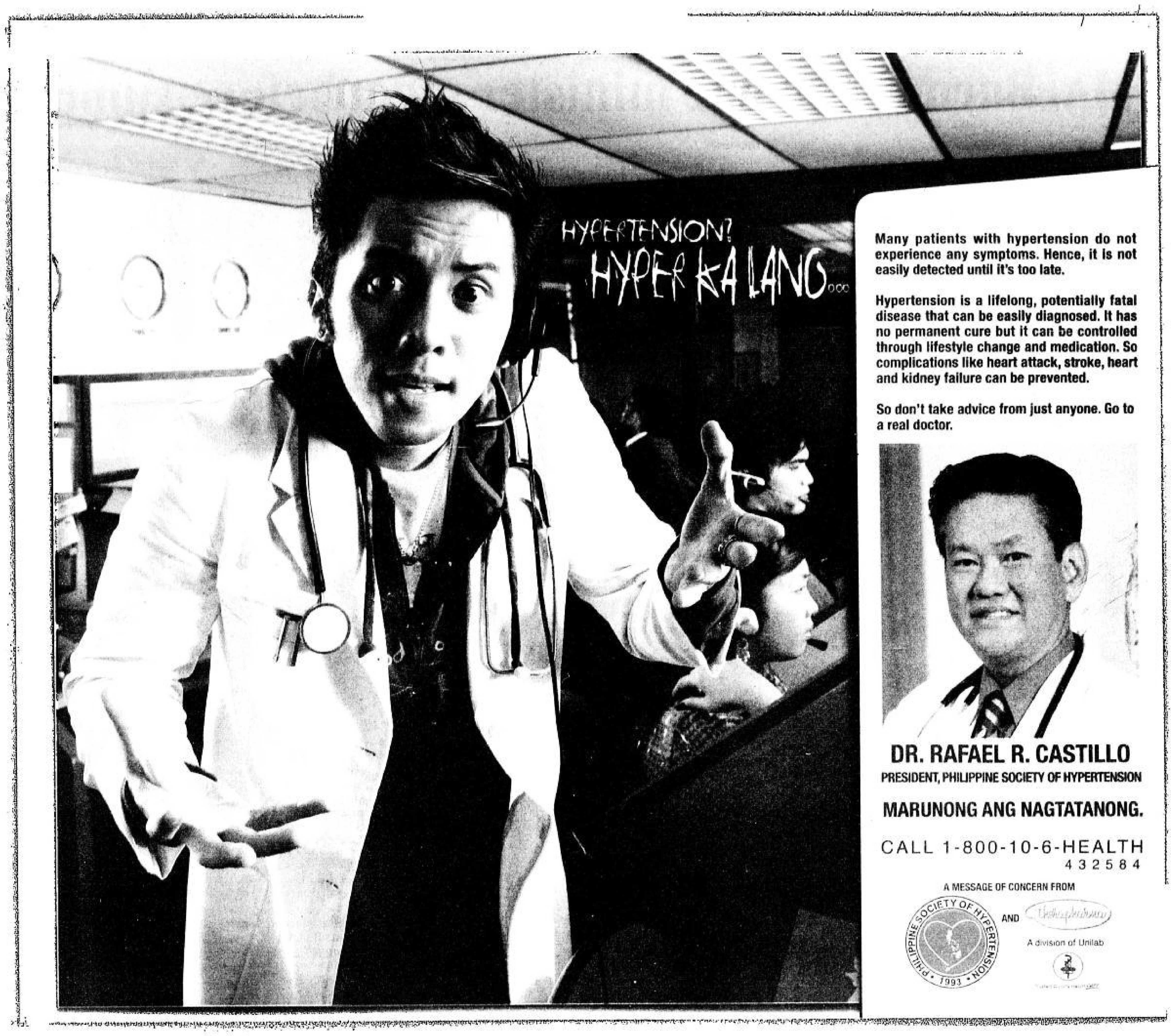
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GMA, Burmese prime minister meet before summit

From page A1

Their agenda is my agenda in Singapore: Energy independence, environmental stewardship, a strong economy and a commitment to human rights," she said.

Aside from her bilateral talks with the Burmese prime minister, Ms Arroyo is expected to meet with Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao late tomorrow afternoon and New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark on Nov. 21.

The date of her talks with Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Hsieh Loong has not been announced.

Ms Arroyo and her party are expected to return to Manila on Nov. 22.

Prepared in Cebu

Ms Arroyo noted that the groundwork for some of the major undertakings which this week's Singapore summit planned to take was done during the 12th summit held in Cebu.

"We are proud to announce that Asean is making progress on each and every initiative we started in Cebu—and this is good news for the Philippines. We are determined to complete in Singapore what we started in Cebu," she said.

Among the Philippine initiatives that have been included in the charter are the preamble on Asean being a socially responsible community and the group's pledge to promote closer cooperation in education, science and technology.

The Philippines also batted for the establishment of an Asean human rights body.

The Asean charter was drafted during the Cebu summit.

Economic master plan

Other documents expected to be signed by Asean leaders are the declarations on economic cooperation, environmental protection and the problem of climate change.

The Asean economic blueprint is a master plan that details specific actions to promote the free movement of goods, services, investment, skilled labor and capital by 2015.

"Asean is becoming a more cohesive regional powerhouse that will enhance the interests of each member nation and provide balance to the rise of China as well as to our traditional relationship with North America and Europe," Ms Arroyo said.

"We are committed to advance our commitment to human rights, propel our commitment to a healthy environment led by energy self sufficiency and continue to strengthen our economic comeback," she added.

Ms Arroyo said she would also work to help address the concerns of the overseas Filipino worker.

Filipino professionals

Other agreements expected to be signed at the ministerial level include the Asean Mutual Recognition Agreement on architectural services and the Asean MRA on surveying qualifications.

Philippine Foreign Assistant Secretary Luis Cruz said Filipino professionals were expected to benefit greatly from the MRAs.

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo is welcomed by Singaporean Ministers Yu -Foo Yee Shoon and Lim Cheng Hoe upon her arrival at the VIP Terminal at Changi International Airport.
MALACANANG-PCPO

"We are building a borderless community (where there) is free flow of goods and in this case free flow of services," he said.

"One of the expected developments (this) week is the signing of the mutual recognition agreements covering architects and surveyors."

With the MRAs, architects and surveyors from member-states no longer need to take licensure examinations in the other Asean countries for them to practice their professions in each other's territory.

"Many Filipinos will benefit from these MRAs. In Singapore alone, there are many skilled architects and surveyors," Cruz said.

There are two existing MRAs—those for engineers and for nurses.

Commercial flight

Ms Arroyo took a commercial plane to Singapore, sharing the flight with close to about 180 passengers of Philippine Airlines Flight PR 501.

It was one of the few times that Ms Arroyo flew on a commercial flight for an overseas official trip. In past trips abroad, she usually went on chartered PAL flights, or used a Learjet for domestic trips.

Of Ms Arroyo's 58-member entourage, 17 took business class while the rest, including security and staff, were in economy. In the VIP cabin were Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye, Trade Secretary Peter Favila and Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo.

The President's daughter Luli arrived at the airport with her mother minutes before the 2:40 p.m. flight. Ms Arroyo was the last to board the plane.

Host Singapore's Foreign Minister George Yeo said the Asean leaders' informal dinner on Monday would be "the critical meeting" for adopting a common position on Burma.

"That's a family dinner, there will be no officials present; there will be no closed-circuit television. It's just the leaders meeting among themselves. We expect Myanmar to be discussed at that meeting," he said.

Pressure on Asean

The 10-nation Asean is under tremendous pressure from its trading partners, the United States and Europe, over Burma.

US Trade Representative Susan Schwab, who arrived on Sunday for a meeting with Asean economic ministers, will underscore Washington's concerns over the junta's "failure to make a serious commitment ... to civilian democratic rule," the US Embassy said in a statement.

Southeast Asian leaders are hoping Burma will not completely overshadow the summit agenda and detract from key objectives: progress on free trade, controlling climate change, and formally transforming Asean into a legal entity by adopting the Asean charter.

The charter calls for setting up a regional human rights body. But it contains no punitive measures for rogue members violating human rights, which effectively lets Burma off the hook.

"I'm not sure if it will have teeth but it will certainly have a tongue," Yeo said. "It will certainly have moral influence if nothing else."

Asean's 10 members—Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Burma, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam—range from very poor to the moderately rich. They also span a vast political spectrum, including democracies, a monarchy, military rules and a communist regime.

Many of its members still see more value in bilateral deals to avoid being bogged down by partners moving slowly on liberalization. *With reports from Christine O. Avendaño, Tarra V. Quismundo and AP*

Gov'ts, traders told: Prepare for single Asean market

From page A1

ness eroded furthermore," Cambodian Commerce Minister Cham Prasidh told a gathering of business leaders ahead of the annual Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) summit, which opens on Monday in Singapore.

Faced with increasing competition from Asia's economic powerhouses China and India, the 10-member regional association agreed last year to form an economic community by 2015 with a single market for the free flow of goods, services, investments and skilled labor.

The Cambodian minister asked why Asean members were not able to compete with India and China.

"It's because goods from one province of China go to another province without paying duty. That's why the China product is very competitive," Cham Prasidh said.

"Now, if we in Asean, we behave like we are one province ... we are going to have, at the end of the road, a very competitive bloc."

Asean has a market of more than half a billion people with a combined gross domestic product more than US$500 billion (euro341 billion). Its members are Brunei, Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

Like wedding ceremony

Cham Prasidh said Asean's plans to adopt a charter aimed at giving the bloc a legal identity was like a "wedding ceremony" that marked an important step toward market integration.

"It means now you have responsibility, vis-a-vis your counterpart, or spouse ... because now we're legally tied together," he said.

Asean leaders are also expected to sign on Tuesday an economic blueprint that will set out milestones for removing trade barriers among member nations.

"Either Asean gets into the act or integration will bypass Asean, and integration will involve new players like China and India and other emerging economies," Singapore Trade Minister Lim Hng Kiang said.

"In a way we are setting up the framework, in a way we are also playing catch-up," Lim said.

"The thinking is that Asean has this window of opportunity in the next three to five years to get this economic integration done, so as to be able to compete with India and with China."

Skepticism

Indonesian Trade Minister Mari Pangestu conceded there was skepticism over whether Asean could effectively implement the plan to free up trade, given the concerns by businesses that a single regional market would increase competition.

"How do we consummate this marriage? Quite frankly, it's not going to be easy," said Pangestu, who also addressed the conference. "Not all business people are gung-ho about Asean economic integration."

She said domestic businesses would have to improve their ability to upgrade productivity and innovation and meet changing expectations of their customers for delivery of their goods.

Piyush Gupta, the Singapore country officer for US financial giant Citigroup, said the next few years would be "crucial" for Asean.

"The charter signing in the next couple of days and this thrust to getting the 2015 economic community is make or break," he told the forum on Saturday.

"I think it's really crucial that over the next three, four years, we start putting our money where our mouth is and starting getting this community to function like a community."

Short-term goals

For its part, the Asian Development Bank said Asean should set short-term goals to convince skeptical investors that members of the regional grouping could integrate their economies by 2015.

"(Intermediate targets) can be a way to facilitate the road to an Asean economic community by 2015," ADB president Haruhiko Kuroda told Reuters on Sunday.

For instance, Asean could free up trade and investment among member countries ahead of 2015 and leave more complex issues such as capital controls to a later date, Kuroda said.

He acknowledged that Asean's 40-year track record in meeting previous commitments had been poor but said the leaders of the 10-member bloc appeared determined to forge an economic union to boost competitiveness in the face of the rise of China and India.

Kuroda said countries, such as Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand, should reduce or eliminate fuel subsidies and replace them with direct support for poor families most affected by higher energy costs.

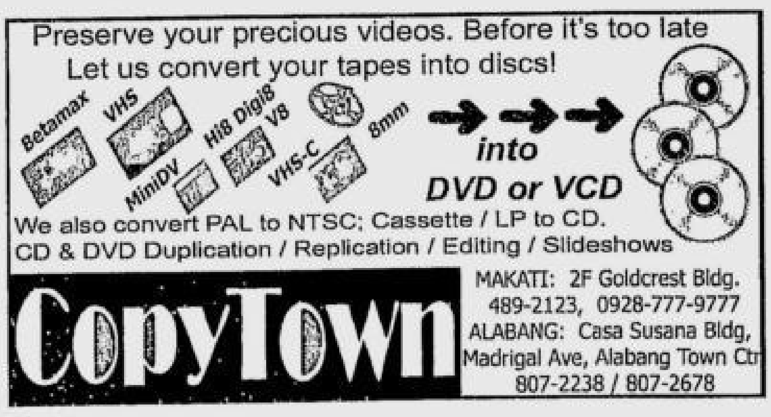
"In general, subsidies do not make sense," he said, noting they encouraged overconsumption to the detriment of both the environment and government finances.

US slowdown

Kuroda also said oil prices close to $100 a barrel, along with a slowing economy in the United States, could hurt Asian economic growth in coming months even though growth in Asia, excluding Japan, this year may exceed the ADB's forecast of 8.3 percent.

"If the US economy has a very serious slowdown or recession, then Asean economies would be seriously affected and growth rates would slow down," he said.

While increased regional trade and improved domestic demand had reduced Southeast Asia's dependence on the wellbeing of the US economy, this did not mean that Asia had "decoupled" from the world's top economy, as some economists have suggested. *Reports from AP, AFP and Reuters*



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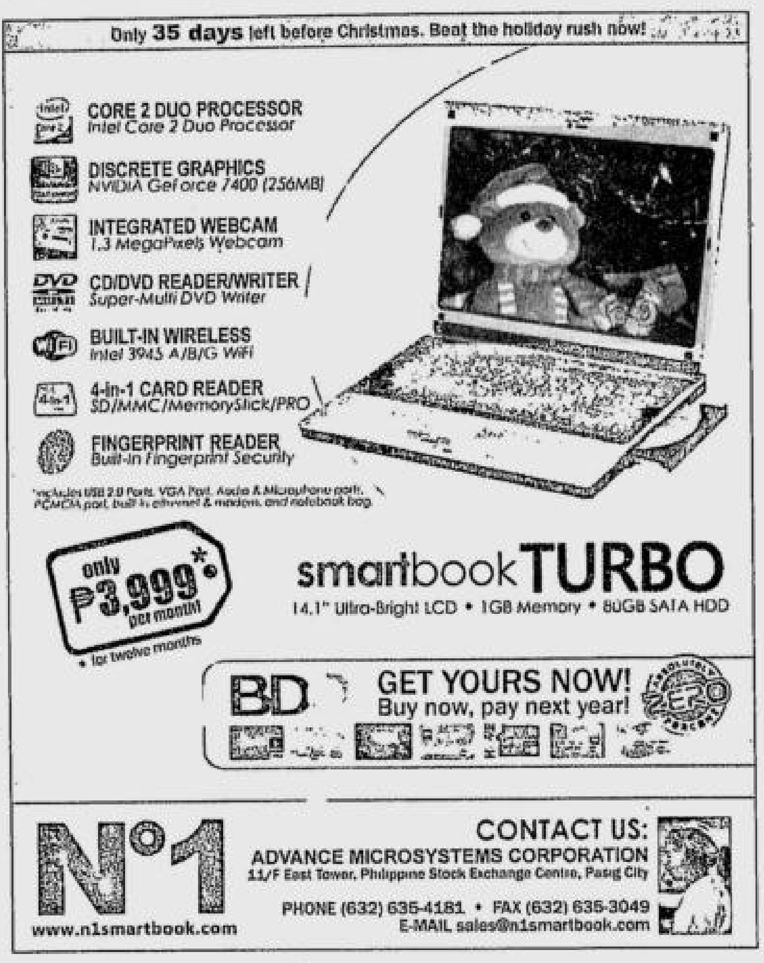

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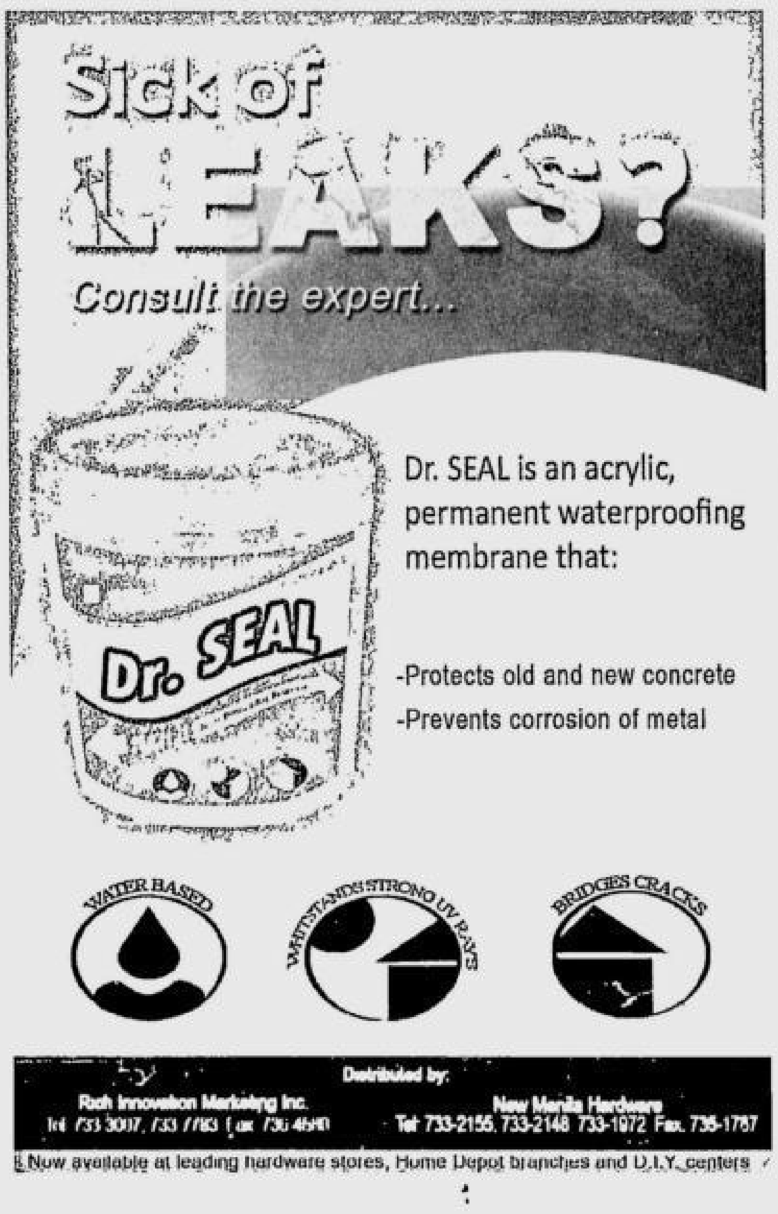

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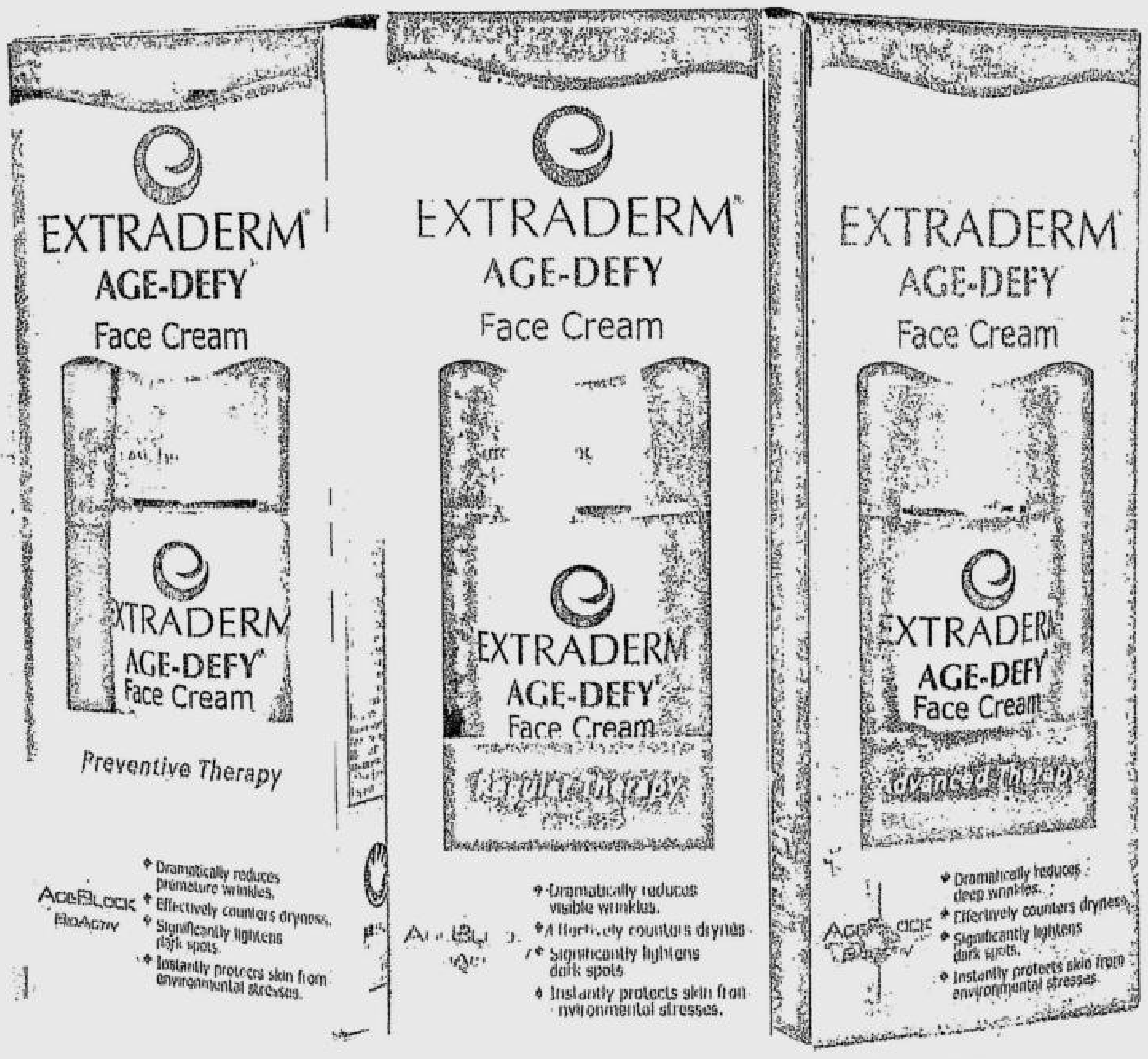
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Environmentalists want more action

From page A1

ment is any indication, Asean has no intention to go beyond mere rhetoric. This response is not commensurate to the scale and severity of the climate crisis," Ballesteros said.

"The declaration recognizes the severe impacts of climate change and yet the steps it is proposing fall far short of decisive action. Worse, it endorses false solutions such as nuclear power and supposedly cleaner fossil fuels."

Troubling

Ballesteros called the lack of substance especially troubling as Asean member Indonesia would be hosting a crucial United Nations climate change conference next month in Bali.

"The very meeting that will determine the fate of the planet is taking place in Asean's backyard," she said.

Delegates to the Bali conference will try to thrash out a new deal to replace the Kyoto Protocol, which expires in 2012, after the Nobel-winning UN climate panel warned that the impact of global warming could be "abrupt or irreversible."

Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said he hoped this week's Asean and East Asia summits would build momentum toward the Bali meeting.

"Southeast Asia can also play an important role in climate change mitigation because of its rich forestry resources," which can absorb carbon dioxide emissions, Lee told the Straits Times newspaper.

But Senga said the 16 nations invited to the East Asia Summit—including Japan, which he called the world's most energy efficient country—could make deeper commitments in the post-Kyoto Protocol era.

India is the world's fourth biggest producer of wind energy and the Philippines is the world's second largest geothermal energy producer, while China is an emerging solar power producer, he said.

"Members of the East Asia Summit and Asean have the technologies and experience that they can share with each other," Senga said. "But right now, there are no workable mechanisms by which these countries can help each other."

Senga called on Asean and its partners to cooperate more fully so they can "harness these strengths of individual countries in terms of sustainable energy."

Intensifying pressure

With just over two weeks left before the crucial 11-day forum in Indonesia, decision-makers are under intensifying pressure to do something about greenhouse gases—and do it quickly.

The starkest warning of all came on Saturday from the top UN scientists, gathered under the Nobel-winning Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

Summarizing a massive review of the evidence, the IPCC declared it was more than 90-percent sure that humans were to blame for rising temperatures.

On current trends, the panel said, surging emissions of greenhouse gases will relentlessly warm Earth's atmosphere, damaging ice and snow cover and causing the oceans to expand and thus rise—and the impacts could be "abrupt or irreversible."

In such a scenario, mankind would face wide-ranging misery in the form of crop failure, storm damage and ill health as drought, floods, cyclones, mosquito pests and waterborne disease become more frequent or intensive, it added.

The sober, neutrally worded report by this prestigious group gives little "wriggle room" for politicians to deny or play down the global warming issue.

In political terms, it is the equivalent of a blast from a sawn-off shotgun as environment ministers prepare for Bali, where they will be asked to agree a two-year "road map" of negotiations for accelerating cuts in greenhouse gases.

Those clamoring for action at the Dec. 3-14 Bali talks include the European Union, which is leading a charge to halve global emissions by the middle of the century compared to 1990 levels.

Political reality

Behind the ponderous scientific data, however, lurk the quicksilver shades of political reality.

The negotiation "road map" sketched at Bali must satisfy the European Union, Japan and Canada and other countries that want deep, fast-track cuts in emissions.

But it also has to meet the positions of the United States and China, which together account for roughly half of all carbon emissions.

For different reasons, both countries are refusing to sign up to targeted pledges for curbing their dangerous pollution.

China, a voracious burner of coal, says it cannot afford any measures that imperil its long rise out of poverty, even though it is acutely aware of the global warming crisis.

Beijing also argues that, even if it is poised to surpass the United States as the world's top carbon dioxide emitter, rich countries are historically to blame for the global warming.

Asking developing nations in the throes of robust economic growth—including India, Brazil and Mexico—to simply end their use of fossil fuels is unfair, according to these countries.

The oil-addicted United States—which emits twice as much carbon dioxide per capita as Europe—abandoned the Kyoto Protocol under President George W. Bush in 2001 and is fiercely opposed to any mandatory approach for tackling emissions.

Washington is pushing for a voluntary, technology-led tack to reduce carbon dioxide, with particular focus on sectors such as energy, transport, steel making and the cement industry.

Accommodating all these different positions will be a massive undertaking, a juggling act complicated further by terrible pressures of time. *AFP*

Libre turns 6 …

From page A1

sections that will give families more choices on how to enjoy their time together even with a limited budget. We want to feature stories that will bring more bang for the buck," she said.

This following observations that working parents, especially in urban areas, want to spend more quality time with their families but are looking for more variety other than the consumerist malling experience.

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Aside from this more leisurely slant, she added that LIBRE would also focus on information and issues relevant to working class commuters, such as classified ads for jobs and services.

Weddings, etc.

Romualdez said LIBRE would have theme supplements catering to specific needs of commuters, such as weddings and other occasions or additional pages for specialized topics like pets.

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LIBRE has a circulation of 110,000 copies with no returns as audited by SGV and Co. during the period of June 2005 to June 2006. It has a pass-on readership of four persons per copy.

Since November 2001, LIBRE has beaten three competitors that were also distributed free of charge in both the LRT and MRT stations.

They include the Metro News given away on a weekly basis in MRT stations, Pasa 'Yo which started in 2005 and lasted just over a year, and Standard Express which folded recently, also after a run of more than a year. *Cathy Yamsuan*

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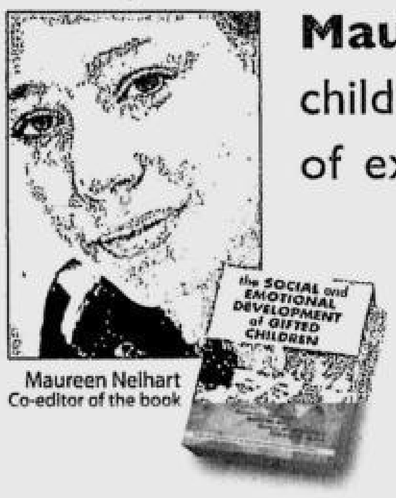
the SOCIAL and EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT of GIFTED CHILDREN
Maureen Neihart
Co-editor of the book

Maureen Neihart, Psy.D. is a licensed clinical child psychologist with more than twenty-five years of experience in counseling high-ability children. She is a former member of the Board of Directors of the National Association for the Gifted in the U.S. Presently, Dr. Neihart serves on the editorial boards of the Gifted Child Quarterly, Roeper Review, and Journal of Secondary Gifted Education.

Keynote speaker: Sen. Edgardo Angara

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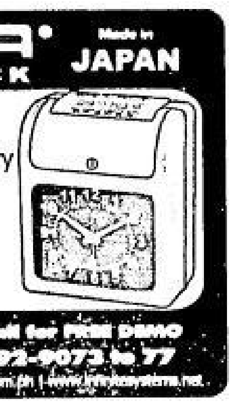

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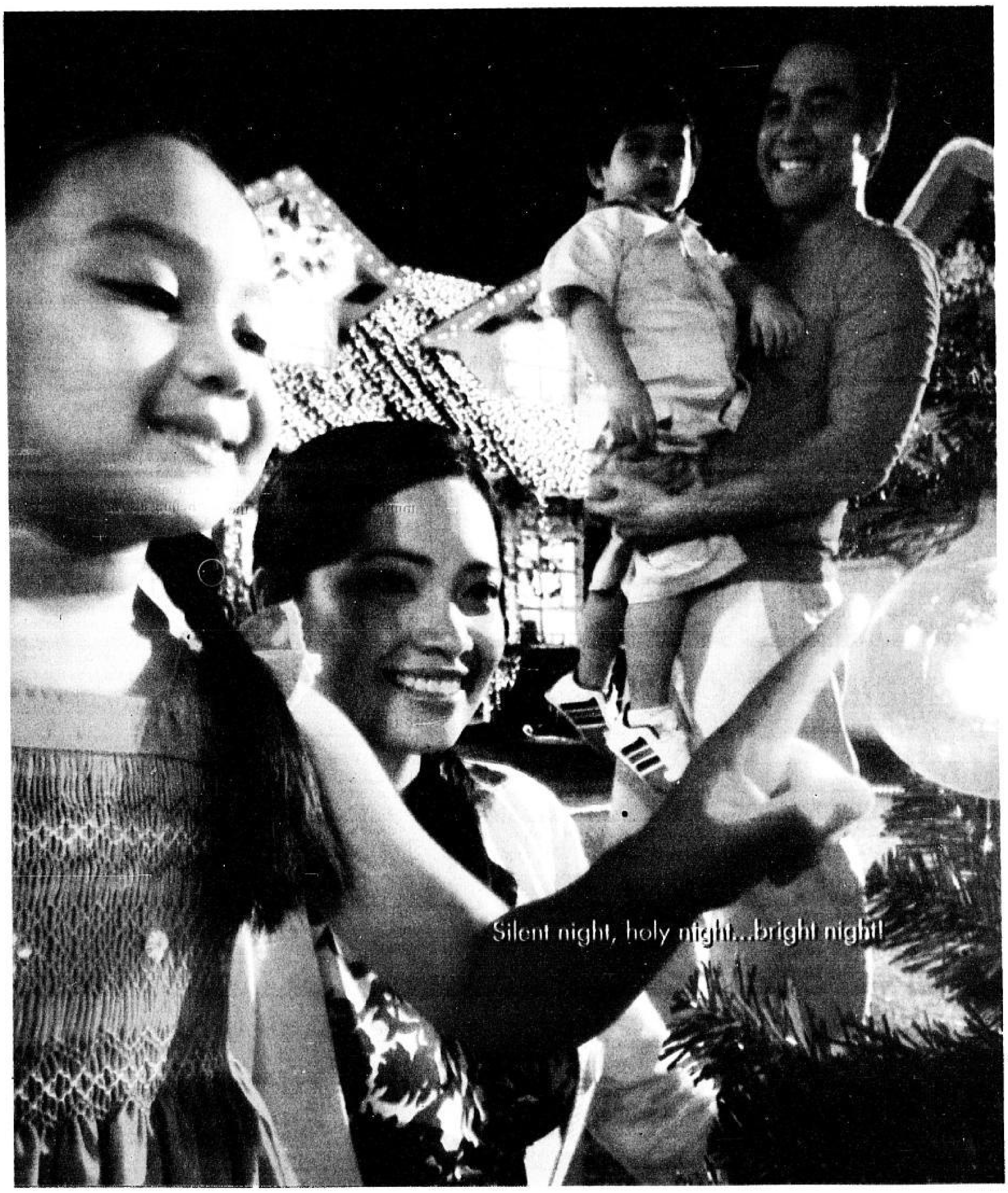
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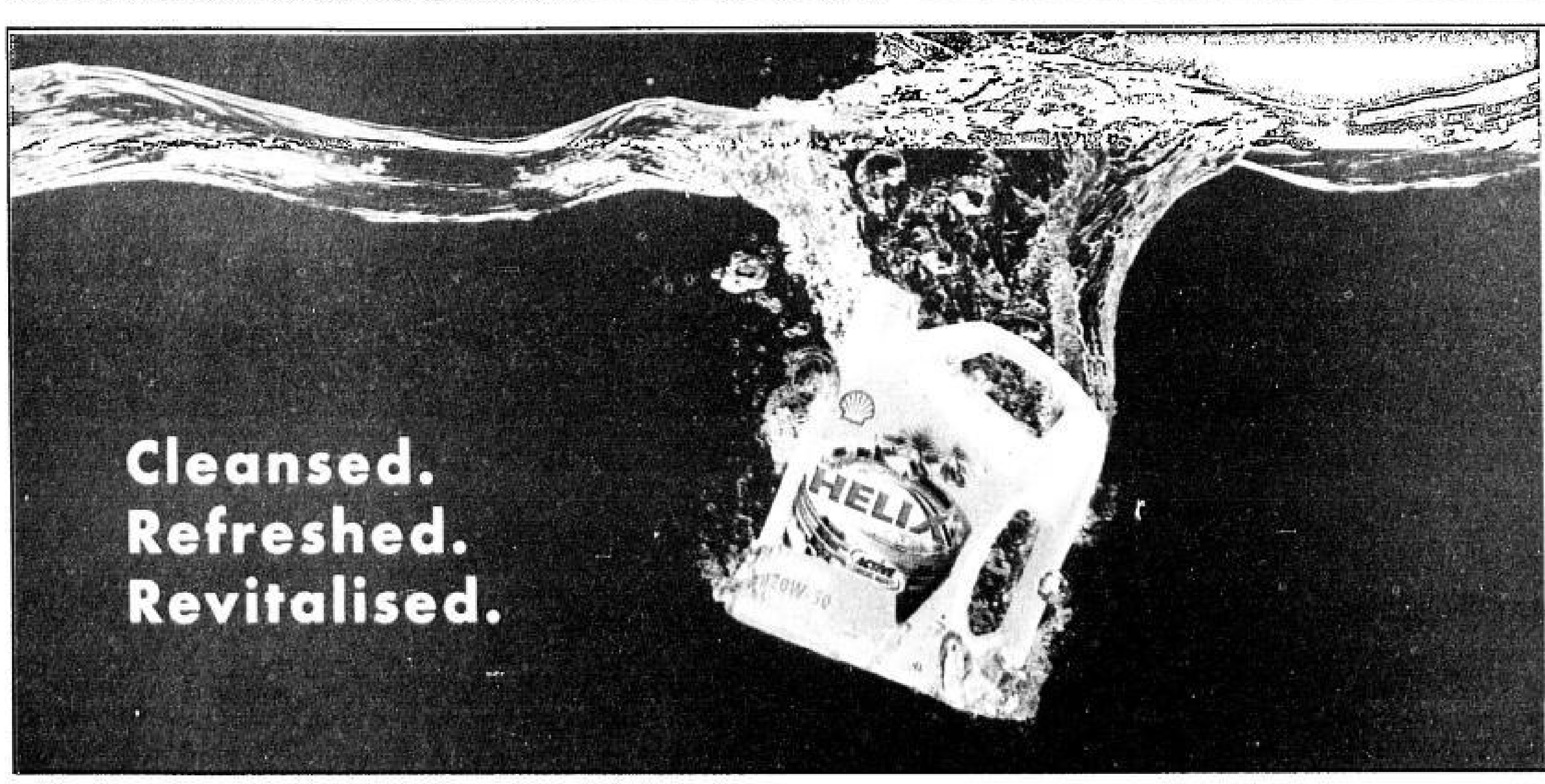

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More ex-Pinoys seeking dual citizenship

By Margaux C. Ortiz

FORMER FILIPINOS WHO HAD CHOSEN to settle in North America have been reacquiring their Philippine citizenship to be able to invest in the country, the Bureau of Immigration said yesterday.

Immigration Commissioner Marcelino Libanan said nearly 43,000 former Filipinos had reacquired Philippine citizenship since the bureau started implementing the dual citizenship law more than three years ago.

"Former Filipinos who became Americans topped the list of applicants, followed by those from Canada and Australia," Libanan said.

He said that of the 42,879 applications for dual citizenship that had been approved, 14,479 were filed at the BI main office in Intramuros while 28,400 were submitted in the various Philippine consulates abroad.

"As a result, these former Pinoys are again enjoying their rights and privileges as citizens of the Philippines," Libanan, a former congressman who was a principal author of Republic Act No. 9225 or the Citizenship Retention and Reacquisition Act, said.

Libanan said Congress passed the law in 2003 but the BI started processing applications only in April 2004 after Malacañang designated the bureau the law's lead implementing agency.

He explained that under the act, natural-born Filipinos who became naturalized citizens of other countries were deemed not to have lost their Philippine citizenship.

He said the law was enacted in line with the thrust of the Arroyo administration to encourage former Filipinos to return to the land of their birth and buy property and invest in business.

Under the revised rules, applicants for dual citizenship are no longer obliged to submit a birth certificate from the National Statistics Office to prove that they are natural-born Filipinos.

Instead, an applicant may submit a birth certificate from the civil registrar of his birthplace and other documents, such as an old Philippine passport, voter's affidavit or marriage contract to prove that he is a natural-born Filipino.

Ex-Lourdes principal dies at 64

CESAR R. AUNARIO, a former teacher and ex-principal of Lourdes School Quezon City, died after suffering a massive stroke on Friday. He was 64.

Aunario taught Algebra, Trigonometry and Physics to Lourdes high school students in the 1960s and '70s prior to his appointment as Lourdes elementary school principal.

His body lies at the Marian Memorial Chapels along Marcos Highway near the Sta. Lucia mall and Town and Country Homes.

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Fears raised on fate of Asian crews

NAIROBI—COMMUNICATION has been lost with a Comorros-flagged cargo ship seized by pirates off the coast of Somalia last month, raising fears for the crew's safety, a maritime monitoring group said Saturday.

The MV Al Marjan, with 22 mostly Asian crew members on board, was seized on Oct. 19 as it sailed to the port of Mogadishu from Dubai in the United Arab Emirates.

"We are worried that the ship has cut communication with the owner and the rest of the world," said Andrew Mwangura of the Kenyan branch of the Seafarers' Assistance Programme.

No negotiations

"This is the second week since it cut communication, which means there are no negotiations going on. This is a very bad indicator on the fate of the crew," Mwangura told Agence France Presse.

The freighter is owned by Shahmir Maritime of St. Vincent and the Grenadines but is operated by Dubai-based Biyat International.

Mwangura explained that "cutting communication" between pirated vessels and the outside world in the past had been an indication that "something bad" had happened on board.

Mwangura said negotiations were also underway to free a Japanese tanker, the Golden Nori that was hijacked on Oct. 28 with 23 crew members from the Philippines, Burma (Myanmar) and South Korea. Their condition is unknown.

The vessel was sailing from Singapore to Israel when it was seized.

A million dollars

"I expect that the pirates will ask for ransom of more than a million dollars to free the tanker," he told AFP.

The Danish freighter, Danica White, was freed in August after nearly three months off the Somali coast after a $1.5-million ransom was paid.

The US Navy patrolling the Horn of Africa and Gulf of Aden has urged the pirates to abandon the vessels.

Rampant piracy off Somalia stopped in the second half of 2006 but resumed when an Islamist movement that had enforced a strict rule was ousted by Ethiopian and Somali transitional government troops at the end of the year.

Somalia lies at the mouth of the Red Sea on a major trade route between Asia and Europe via the Suez canal. *AFP*

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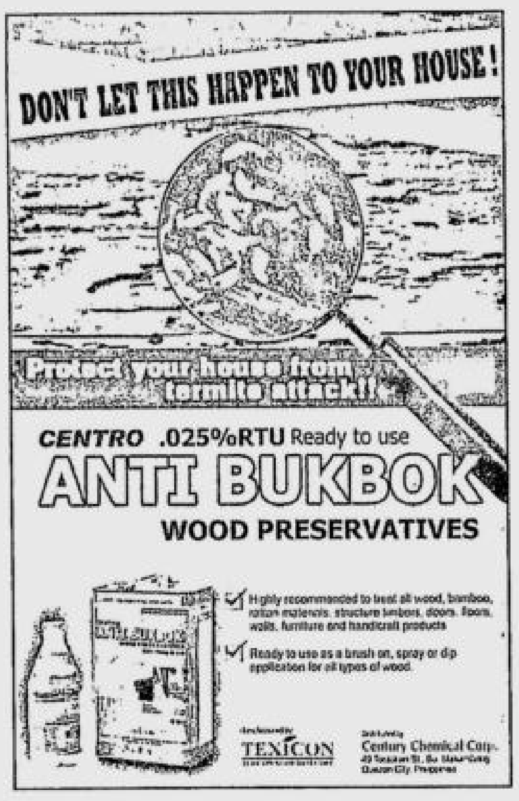
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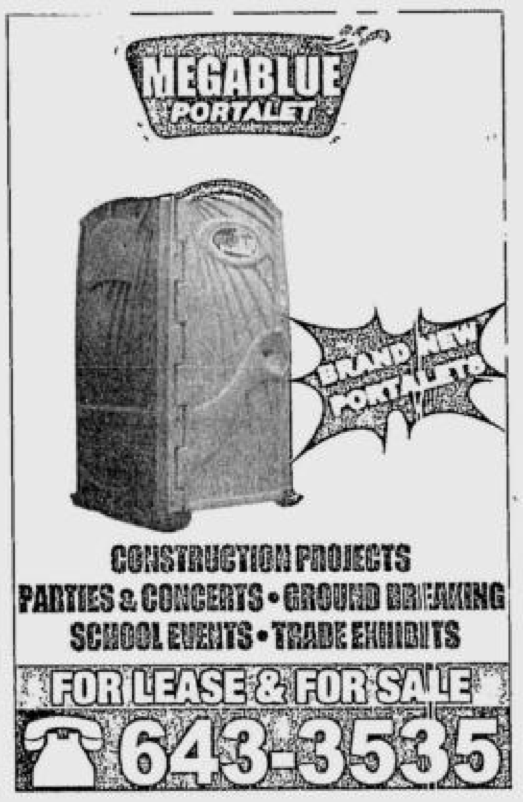
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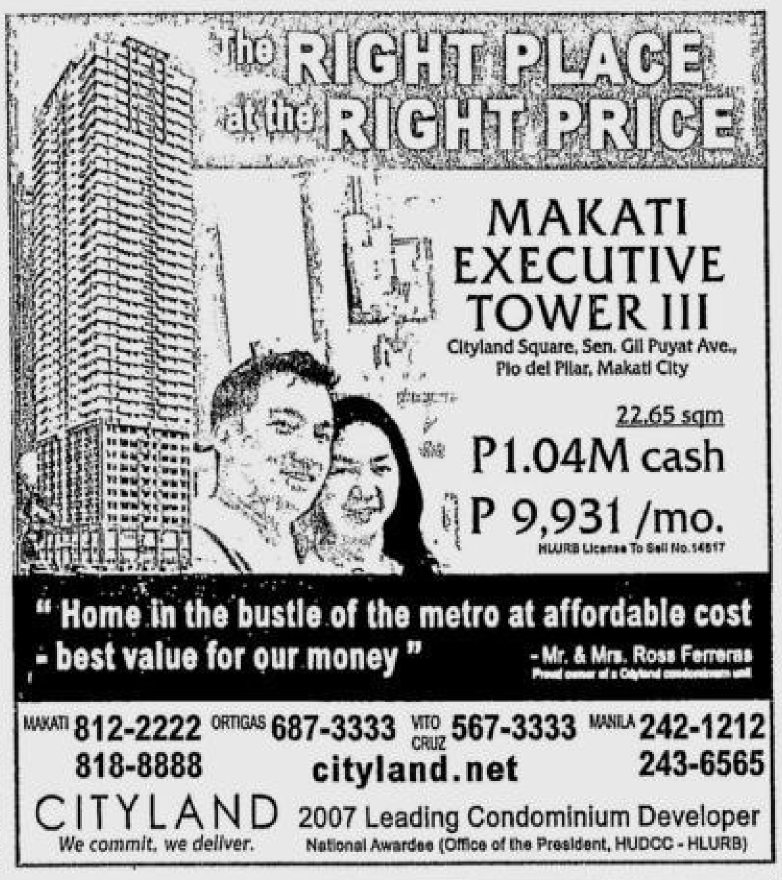
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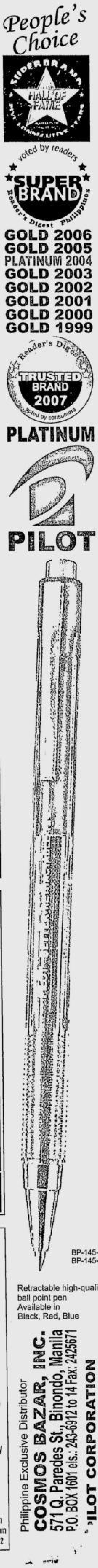
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Pilipinas Shell Foundation, Inc. (PSFI), established in 1992, serves as the social arm of the Shell companies in the Philippines (SciP). PSFI manages social development programs of national and local scales ranging from leadership enhancement and attitude development; technical and vocational skills development, entrepreneurship development, educational improvement; and, environmental stewardship. PSFI currently operates in 14 sites nationwide – Pandacan, Batangas City, Palawan, Oriental Mindoro, Muntinlupa City, Rizal, Camarines Sur, Tagbilaran City, Apayao, Quirino, Misamis Oriental, Bacolod, and the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao with focus on Sulu and Tawi-Tawi.

As it celebrates its 25th anniversary this year, PSFI marks another milestone as it surpassed its one millionth beneficiaries mark in June. PSFI's latest beneficiaries count add up to more than 1.4 million individuals. *"We are committed to come up with more programs that not only reaches more individuals but more importantly, empowers people to improve their way of life,"* says PSFI Executive Director Edgardo Veron Cruz.

"In the course of our visits throughout the country, we observed that many young people were out of school and out of jobs," Cesar Buenaventura, PSFI Chairman and former Country Chair of SciP recalls. Thus, Sanayan sa Kakayahang Industriyal (SKIL) and Sanayan sa Kakayahang Agrikultura (SAKA) were designed to impart industrial and agricultural skills to young Filipinos to help them become productive and responsible members of society.

To date, 9,000 young men and women have completed various SKIL courses ranging from structural welding, pipe-fitting, electrical work, air conditioning repair, electronics, and automotive mechanics. SKIL has been expanded to include contact center and animation skills courses. In partnership with Pilipinas Shell Petroleum-Retail and Shell dealers, "Gas Mo Bukas Ko" (GMBK) has also been launched to provide scholarships to Shell station staff to enhance their employability and livelihood skills.

SAKA boasts of 850 graduates and is complemented by Shell Training Farms and Integrated Farming Bio-systems trainings where more than 10,000 farmers have benefited. PSFI also manages a number of programs on livelihood and entrepreneurship, education, and health – Sanayan sa Kakayahang Pangangalakal, Suporta sa Buhay Microfinance Program, Shell Youth Business Camp, Specialized English Enhancement Course for High School and Elementary Teachers (SPEECH), Impok pang-Kalusugan, and Kilusan Ligtas Malaria. PSFI's health programs have benefited more than 900,000 individuals while the Movement Against Malari with a grantfr Aids, Tuberculo to reach outrto started in 200

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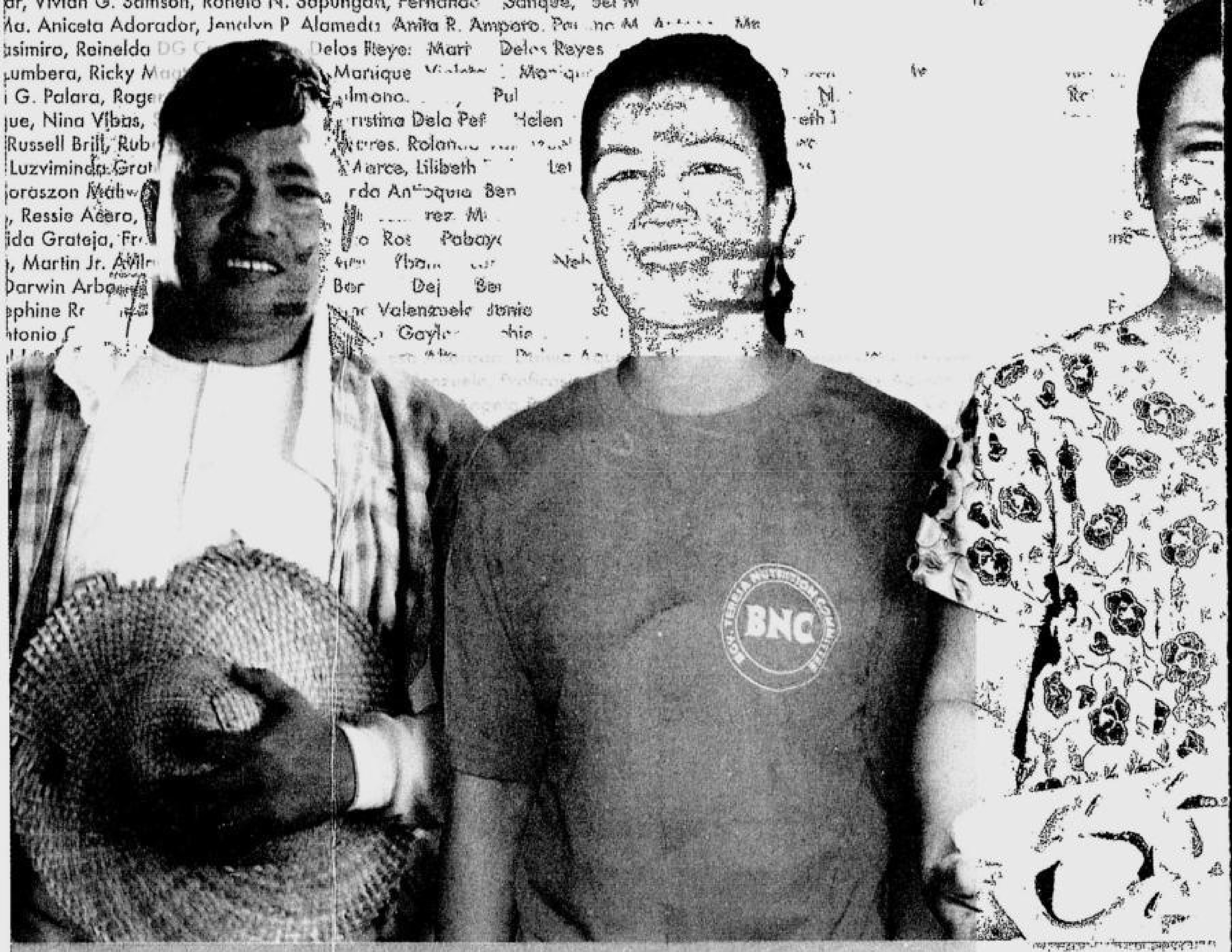

Over a million dreams fulfilled.
Over a million lives transformed.

For a quarter of a century, Pilipinas Shell Foundation has kept its commitment to creating programs that ha of over a million Filipinos. Health programs such as Kilusan Ligtas Malaria have helped save many lives and impr of their beneficiaries. On the other hand, livelihood and skills training programs like SKIL, SAKA and Gas Mo Bukas many Filipinos self-reliant and self-sufficient. They have gone on to become outstanding contributors to their communitie They have lent their skills, provided employment and created the life they want for themselves. Their successes are more they are inspirations.

So as we celebrate 25 years of Pilipinas Shell Foundation, we also celebrate success for over

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6 and will run until 2010.

PSFI SCHOLARS SHARE THEIR INSPIRING SUCCESS STORIES

For 25 years, PSFI has empowered 1.4 million Filipinos and given them the means to be self-reliant. Here are three of these many beneficiaries whose lives have been changed for the better.

PLANTING THE SEEDS OF HOPE

Marinez Seracarpio-Dingcol was among nine Palaweños sent to join the 5th Batch of SAKA scholars who attended Pampanga Agricultural College (PAC) in 1988. She was then an 18-year old high school graduate who had never been away from home.

Asked what made the SAKA program special, she said, *"hands on and theory are very different. We were given an area to develop and that training made all the difference."* Upon graduating from SAKA, Landbank of the Philippines granted her a Php20,000.00 livelihood loan. She used the grant to develop her father's two-hectare land using an integrated farming system. In 1993, the local government of Puerto Princesa recognized her farming prowess and invited her to become the agricultural technician of the province.

Now 36 years old, Marinez says, *"I have reached what I have always wanted to become – a farmer, and I could not ask for anything more."*

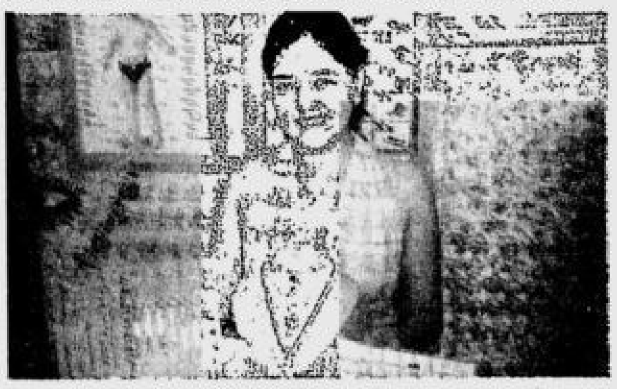
A CONTINUING PURSUIT OF SKILLS

Edgardo Etac was 18 years old when he saw a newspaper advertisement announcing the screening for Shell scholarships at the West Visayas State University. *"I badly wanted to finish schooling because I knew the face of poverty too well. I saw how poor my parents were and I wanted to live a different life,"* he says. He passed the screening and completed a basic automotive course. Later on, he underwent a three-year Engineering Technician Course at the Technological University of the Philippines-Visayas (TUP-V) and obtained a Diploma in Electronics Technology.

He was referred to Tsukiden Electronics, Inc. by Shell and later reassigned to its subsidiary, Laguna Electronics, Inc. (LEI). From a technician, he has moved up the ranks to become proudly today, Managing Director.

He advises young Shell scholars to *"have the drive to achieve what you want to achieve. Always keep a certain level of commitment for Shell because Shell will help you go further."*

FINDING FORTUNE IN JEWELRY-MAKING



Mary Vil Diate, 22, of Pandacan, Manila was one of 163 aspiring youth entrepreneurs who participated in the Second National Shell Youth Business Camp (YBC) in April. Mary Vil was one of 10 participants granted the Best Individual Business Plan Award for her 10K gold Swarovski retailing and production.

Mary Vil started her business with a capital of Php5,000.00. She sells her made-to-order jewelry from house-to-house. Today, she receives orders from Cebu, Ilocos, Cavite, Bicol, Leyte, and Davao.

Mary Vil learned the most important business lesson in the camp – that business is not a gamble. *"I learned to take risks and trust in what I am capable of doing. I learned to get along well with different people from different places."*

She advises, *"choose a business that is close to your heart."*

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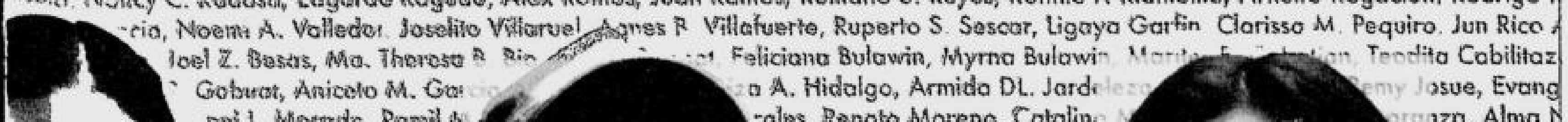

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OPINION

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Gaseous statements

EDITORIAL

SURELY THE ARROYO ADMINISTRATION CAN DO better than this. Responding to the possibility of government subsidies for certain oil products, Secretary Cerge Remonde of the Presidential Management Staff opined, "I'm sure the government is open to all constructive proposals, to mitigate the effects of oil price hikes, especially to the poor, and we are ready to discuss this with the proponents."

This is boilerplate rhetoric, and means absolutely nothing. It goes without saying that any administration, however it defines openness and determines the meaning of constructiveness, is "open to all constructive proposals." Naturally. The addendum that puts special emphasis on the poor is just so much official pablum. As for the administration's readiness to discuss (not necessarily to commit), this is standard PR-talk. Would any administration, faced with a looming oil crisis, dare say it was not ready to discuss possible suggestions?

So far, so blindingly obvious. Is there any possible reason why the Arroyo administration, over the weekend, felt it was justified in restating the obvious? Remonde, whose competence does not include economic matters, was either playing safe, or playing with words, or just plain playing.

Proof? No one, least of all in the oil industry, will seriously think his statement amounts to a new policy.

New Energy Secretary Angelo Reyes was not much better. After meeting with President Macapagal-Arroyo in Malacañang on Saturday, the day yet another round of oil price increases took effect, Reyes, a former general, went on the offensive. He called on the country's oil companies to explain the latest price adjustment. For added effect, he said both the Department of Energy (as expected) and the Department of Justice (now that's a surprise) were "looking into the unreasonableness of the price increases."

Were they, in fact, unreasonable? The administration's energy czar could not say. He only suggested they were. He noted that, if the peso had not strengthened dramatically against the dollar, oil prices would be much higher today. "If the peso's exchange rate was still P55 per dollar, the prices per liter of gasoline and diesel will be more expensive by about P7 to P8 per liter." This is nowhere near saying that Saturday's increases were demonstrably unreasonable.

What do these statements tell us?

First: On the matter of pricing, the government has ceded the ground to the oil firms and, to a lesser extent, to watchdog groups like the Consumer and Oil Price Watch. This is most unfortunate, because it is precisely on account of the industry's deregulated status that the government should set the pricing agenda, or at least define its key terms. But what do we get? In news reports last week, it was the oil companies' well-scripted scenario-building, about the imminence of a steep rise in oil prices in the next few months and the likelihood of a rapid fall thereafter, that carried the day. The DOE, backed up by the implied legal threat the DOJ represents, is reduced to asking the oil firms to explain themselves—after those same companies had already taken to the air waves to justify the adjustments.

Second: The Arroyo administration is ready to play politics with the oil industry, triangulating it against the consuming public. As businessman Raul Concepcion's COPW has shown in the last several years, the oil companies certainly need tight guarding. But with the price of unleaded gasoline, based on the Mean of Platts Singapore benchmark, now just under $100 per barrel, can the administration focus its energies, not on laying the groundwork for playing the blame game, but on actual measures that will help the public cope with the coming shock?

Bad days

FOREIGN COMMENT

I AM SORRY TO SAY THIS, BUT WE ARE HEADED TOWARD really bad days," a prominent energy economist told Time magazine last week ... That was no alarmist talking. It was Fatih Birol, the chief economist for the International Energy Agency, an oil industry organization ... widely considered a reliable indicator of petroleum supplies ... Whether the world supply of oil has absolutely peaked or is not rising to meet demand because of human folly, there's going to be a lot less of the black stuff around in the near future. And that's going to hurt.

The Dallas Morning News

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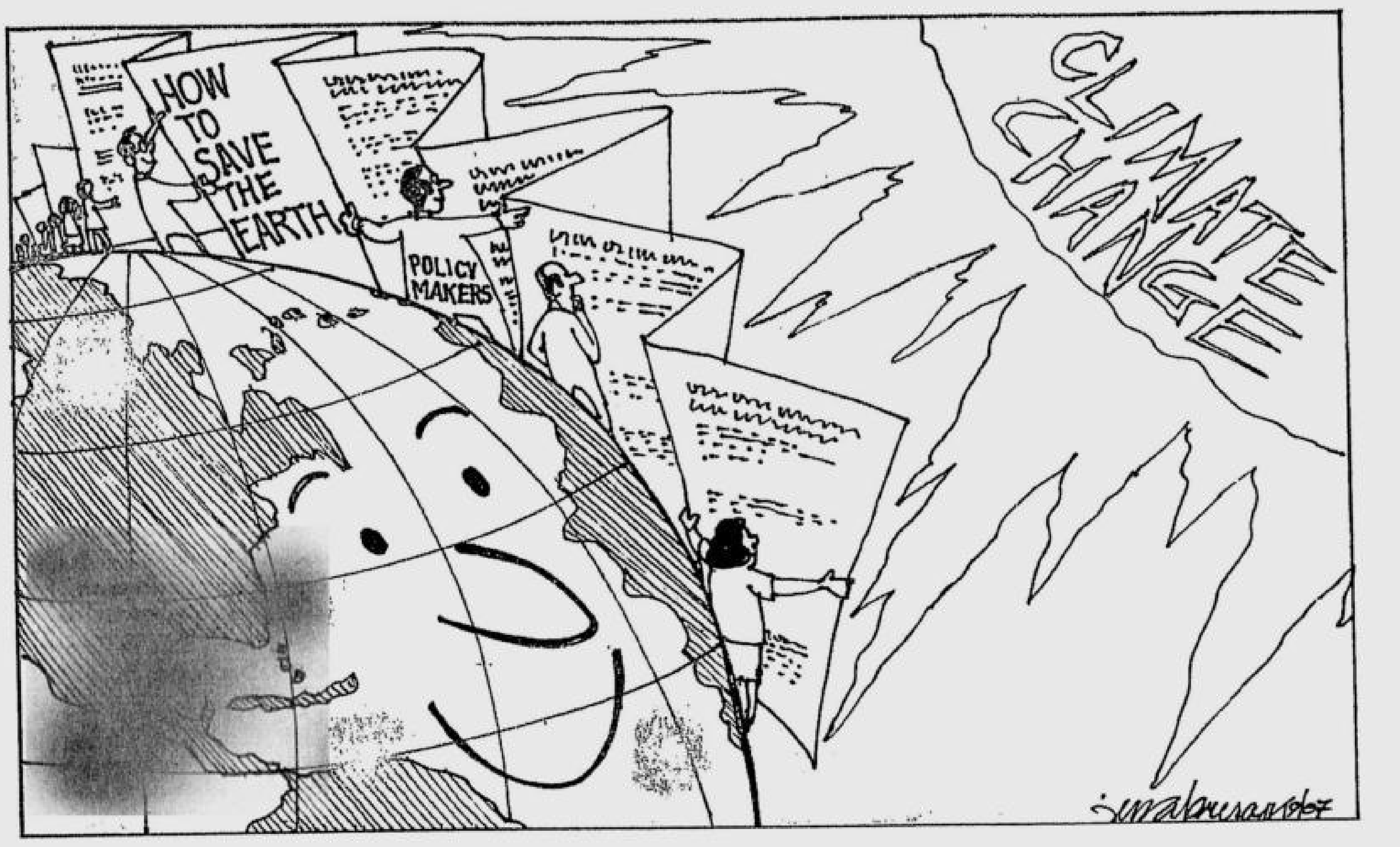


What is the 'fair market value' of land?

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

WE RECEIVE PLENTY OF MAIL COMMENTING on our columns. Unfortunately, we cannot print all of them because of space limitations. Nevertheless, in the interest of fair play, we try to accommodate mail that present other sides so that the readers will have a balanced view of the issues. But also because of lack of space, we have to shorten some of them. Here are two on the Batangas Port land case:

This one is from Ms Erlinda Llana Santiago, one of the landowners in Batangas whose properties are being expropriated by the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA), which protests that the price it is being asked to pay is too much.

"We, the landowners, do not wish to overprice our property. All we want is the fair market value of the land that the government is forcibly taking from us. The declaration of the fair market value of the land is not unilateral on our part. It is the subject of proceedings before the trial court which, by law, is the one that should determine the fair market value of the expropriated property. Unfortunately for the PPA, it squandered its opportunity to present evidence of what it believes to be the fair market value of the property by its failure to participate in the trial despite notice.

"Unlike the PPA, we acted with due diligence in proving before the trial court the fair market value of our property.... Contrary to the claims of PPA that the land is agricultural, the appraiser concluded after ocular inspection that the area is developed and is for commercial/light industrial purposes...

"Mr. Cruz says that the Supreme Court dismissed the PPA's petition for review of the Court of Appeals' decision 'on technicalities and not on the merits of the case.' If he means that the SC did not rule on the correctness of the valuation of the property but on the propriety of the PPA's appeal from the trial court's order, he is correct. But the SC could not have done otherwise without doing injustice to us landowners.... The PPA did not present evidence on the fair market value of the land ... so the SC could not rule on PPA's claims even if it had considered the merits of the case. If the SC ruled on just compensation of the properties, then it would have plucked the value out of thin air."

* * *

A relevant letter is from Ma. Presentacion R. Montesa, executive director of the Bureau of Local Government Finance of the Department of Finance:

"Your column of Sept. 21, 2007 serves as a timely reminder for the government to now put order to the chaotic system of land valuation in this country that has deprived many poor landowners of the right income from the true value of their property, abetted corruption, discouraged the growth of the land market, and at the same time, [caused the] loss for the government of millions in unrealized tax revenues.

"As illustrated in your column, the unexplainable rise in the market value of the Batangas property subject of expropriation from BIR's Zonal Value of P298-440 per sq m and the PPA's Land Acquisition Committee's estimate of P336.83 per sq m to the astronomical P8,000 per sq m demanded by the new owners (businessmen and lawyers who bought portions of the same property from the farmers for as low as P600 per sq m) is mind boggling and infuriating—imagine the government through the PPA unable to implement a vital infrastructure project to benefit the economy because of this ludicrous situation.

"Indeed the same piece of land could have as many different 'market values' depending on what use the value or appraisal of the property serves, i.e. low appraisal value for purposes of taxation (which favors the owner who will pay low taxes to the detriment of the government), high appraisal value, as in the Batangas case, for expropriation purpose (which provides unscrupulous individuals unwarranted quick money while multiplying the cost of government projects), very low land value for CARP (to the disadvantage of legitimate landowners who are fully dependent on land for their livelihood), etc.

"There are a number of government agencies performing land valuation or appraisal, of which the major ones are BIR for Zonal Values as basis for land tax imposed by the national government such as Capital Gains Tax, Documentary Stamp Tax, and Estate Tax; the Local Government Units (LGUs) for the Schedule of Market Values (SMV) as basis for assessment of Real Property Tax; the DPWH for expropriation purposes; and the bank and private appraisers for collaterals or mortgages, each using their own methodologies, systems and other considerations resulting in multiple valuation of land that confuses the public.

"Those who are neither rich nor powerful are robbed of the right income from the 'true market value' of their property while the government is unable to deliver basic services due to poor income from land, a resource that has the biggest potential contribution to the national wealth. It is time for the Honorable Members of the 14th Congress to pass the Valuation Reform Act (VRA) which seeks to establish a set of valuation standards at par with international valuation standards, provide a single valuation base policy, and have a single agency to oversee and provide leadership to the public and the private sector on real property valuation."

Terror

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

IT'S A TESTAMENT TO THE WAY THE BATASAN is regarded by the public today that when a bomb rocked the place last week, and when the possibility existed that the attack had been aimed at the entire institution rather than at a single individual, no expressions of commiseration went its way. Government officials of course immediately condemned the atrocity in the usual "strongest possible terms," chief of them Jose de Venecia, who went on to warn that the act of terrorism would not go unpunished.

But not the public. All the text messages I got were in the form either of jokes or warnings against GMA moving to do a Musharraf in light of the bombing, which might or might not have been self-induced. The one joke that was repeated with much variation, apart from glee, was that the PNP shouldn't bother exerting itself to solve the case, the explosion clearly coming from a massive buildup of methane gas, the Batasan being full of s—t.

I know this country specializes in gallows humor, perversely or instinctively turning the most macabre incident into laughing matter. The instinctive has to do with the saying, "Be careful when the Filipino can no longer laugh because he'll go berserk," which I've always thought was a very good argument for the Filipino ceasing to laugh. Maybe it's time he went berserk. Suffice it to say here however that even on those occasions when the Filipino turns macabre into laughable, there's always a generous sampling of commiseration that goes the way of the victims. That was so in the case of 9/11, that was so in the case of the holdup of a school bus by the school owner, that was the case of the bombing of Glorietta.

That wasn't so here, until it became clear that the attack was aimed at Wahab Akbar and had claimed several lives apart from his. Then the commiseration tumbled—in the direction of the other victims, not the primary one. Certainly, I have not heard all this time a single sentiment expressing anger or sadness at the thought that the congressmen generally were imperiled by the attack. The sentiments I heard expressed were largely, well, let's just say the congressmen won't be sorely missed when they go.

The only place right now that can spark livelier dancing in the streets in lieu of louder sobbing in the dark when its occupants enter the next life, preferably soonest, is Malacañang. But the Batasan clearly ranks second.

All this notwithstanding, I myself condemn the attack in, well, the strongest possible terms. I too would like to warn potential terrorists who might be encouraged by the lack of sympathy for the congressmen and the prospect of being hailed heroes for a bombing expressly aimed at them that terrorist attacks truly will not go unpunished. I am not being facetious or satirical about this. But I mean this in a sense completely different from De Venecia's.

I've never been a believer in terrorism, however the targets of it are the most loathsome individuals or however the provocation for it is severe. At the very least, there are the abundant moral strictures to indict it, which by themselves carry much force. There's nothing platitudinous about the saying that violence begets more violence, or that it merely leads to a wider downward spiral of bloodletting. There's nothing blithe about the belief that a policy of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth will leave only a world of blind and toothless people.

But more than that, I've never believed in terrorism because if terrorism has shown anything it is only that it is insanely counterproductive. It's not just that you pay with an eye for every eye you take, it's that you pay with 10 eyes for every eye you take. It's not just that you pay with a tooth for every tooth you pull, it's that you pay with an entire row of teeth for every tooth you pull. The payback is always severer. The instant gratification is offset by the long-term oppression.

Look at 9/11. Presumably done in retaliation for what the rightist elements in the US government were doing to the Arab counties, all it did was strengthen the rightist elements in the US government, in the form of George W. Bush, Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld and ilk, who earned much paranoid goodwill in the aftermath until they threw it away by invading Iraq. Look at the Sparrow hits of the NPA in the past presumably done to enemies of the people, not least to fellow comrades who disagreed with policy, to project the NPA's capacity to administer punitive justice. All they did was earn for the NPA the fear and distrust of the public, if not goodwill for their victims, and muted protest when the State began butchering political activists for being enemies of the Republic.

Terrorism doesn't weaken the victim, or even kill him. It strengthens him, or revives him. Correspondingly, it doesn't strengthen the terrorist, or resurrects him. It weakens him, and kills him.

That is quite apart from the fact that if it harms anybody, it harms the innocent. Look at the 3,000 Americans who died in Ground Zero. Look at the three people who died with Akbar in the Batasan bombing.

And even that isn't the biggest casualty in terrorism. The biggest casualty is the truth. Bombing presumably evil men doesn't just bury them in the rubble, it buries the evil they've done along with them. It makes people forget what they were in light of what the people who have put them under the rubble are. In this country in particular where death qualifies as a natural purifier, even sending some of the worst scoundrels to have walked on two legs to the Libingan ng mga Bayani by the simple fact of dying, that could be enough to turn Luis Villafuerte, Prospero Nograles, and even Jose de Venecia into martyrs.

That is absolute terror.

Fr. Pedro Arrupe, S.J.

SOUNDING BOARD

Fr. Joaquin G. Bernas, S.J.

EXCUSE ME IF I DEVOTE MY COLUMN TODAY to a man whom I and so many Philippine Jesuits greatly admire and revere—Fr. Pedro Arrupe, S.J. This month we celebrate the centenary of his birth.

It is not easy to measure the impact he has had on the lives not only of Jesuits but also of many others both lay and religious, men and women, Catholics and Protestant Christians and many others. Many simply sum up their affection for him by calling him Don Pedro.

I first experienced the Arrupe magic in 1976 when he summoned me to Rome to give me my marching orders as Provincial Superior of the Philippine Jesuits. I had never met him nor ever communicated with him, and so I guess he just wanted to size me up. It turned out to be not such a big deal after all because he was the easiest person to get close to.

But first, his background. He was Basque, and he grew to manhood in Spain. He cut short his medical studies to join the Jesuits. At that time the Society of Jesus in Spain was experiencing turbulence. Thus it was that Arrupe with many other Jesuits were expelled from Spain by the Republican government. Arrupe had to pursue his philosophical and theological studies in Belgium and the Netherlands.

After his ordination to the priesthood he was sent to the United States to pursue doctoral studies. But before he could complete his studies he was sent as a missionary to Japan in 1939. Father Arrupe was Master of Novices living in the urban outskirts of Hiroshima when the atomic bomb was dropped.

Hiroshima was a turning point in modern world history. The war itself was also a turning point in the life of Arrupe.

Shortly after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Arrupe was arrested on charges of espionage. He was kept in solitary confinement for 33 days. He later wrote that this "was the month in which I learned the most in all my life. Alone as I was, I learned the knowledge of silence, of loneliness, of harsh and severe poverty, the interior conversation with 'the guest of the soul' who had never shown himself to be more 'sweet' than then."

Another turning point was to take place in 1965 when Father Arrupe was elected 28th Superior General of the Society of Jesus. The choice marked the beginning of the post-modern history of the Society of Jesus. The direction would become clearer after Father Arrupe convened and led the 32nd General Congregation of the Society.

The General Congregation is the highest legislative body of the Society. It is summoned only in critical moments. In the Society's more than 400 years, there have been only 34 General Congregations. (A 35th General Congregation has been summoned to convene in January next year.)

The 32nd General Congregation formalized the direction the modern Society was mandated to take in all its varied works—missionary ministry, general pastoral work, education, intellectual apostolate, media, the arts and everything under the sun.

Two key paragraphs from the decrees of the General Congregation sum up Father Arrupe's own vision for the Society of Jesus.

First is his vision for the Society as an institution: "The mission of the Society of Jesus today is the service of faith, of which the promotion of justice is an absolute requirement. For reconciliation with God demands the reconciliation of people with one another."

Second is his vision of what a Jesuit should be: "What is it to be a companion of Jesus today? It is to engage, under the standard of the cross, in the crucial struggle of our time: the struggle for faith and that struggle for justice which it includes."

In the corner of the Jesuit world in which I live and work, an oft-quoted paragraph is one which Father Arrupe delivered to Jesuit alumni in Valencia, Spain. His audience included many who came from prestigious and wealthy families. What he expressed was his sub-vision of what Jesuit education should be.

He started by asking his audience if their Jesuit mentors had educated them for justice. He himself gave the answer: "You and I know what many of your Jesuit teachers will answer to that question. They will answer, in all sincerity and humility: 'No, we have not.'"

He then went on to explain what was expected of Jesuit education. "Today our prime educational objective must be to form men-and-women-for-others; men and women who will live not for themselves but for God and his Christ—for the God-human who lived and died for all the world; men and women who cannot even conceive of love of God which does not include love for the least of their neighbors; men and women completely convinced that love of God which does not issue in justice for others is a farce."

Formation of men-and-women-for-others—this is a continuing mission that is never finished.

What was Arrupe's secret? He summed it up in one paragraph: "Nothing is more practical than finding God, that is, than falling in love in a quite absolute, final way. What you are in love with, what seizes your imagination, will affect everything. It will decide what will get you out of bed in the morning, what you will do with your evenings, how you will spend your weekends, what you read, who you know, what breaks your heart, and what amazes you with joy and gratitude. Fall in love, stay in love and it will decide everything."

The best hope for the nation

REVEILLE

Ramon J. Farolan

EACH TIME I ATTEND A WEDDING, A BIRTHDAY PARTY, an anniversary celebration or any ceremony marking some important event—all of which culminates in a toast—I keep wondering why, more often than not, our people end up raising their glasses and shouting, "Cheers!"

We have such an appropriate word for all of these occasions and we should be using it more often instead of aping our Caucasian friends.

"Mabuhay" means everything to all our people. It is both a command as well as a wish. In the form of a command, it calls for us "to live." When the thought is more of a wish, "Mabuhay" means "May you live." But whatever may be the sentiments behind its use, it expresses the wish for the gift of a long and happy life for the celebrant or the members of an audience. "Mabuhay" also lends itself to a large number of secondary uses: a welcome, congratulations, thanks, good luck, Godspeed, along with many other, similar expressions of goodwill.

"Mabuhay" is both an invocation as well as a celebration of life. It is a beautiful expression. Let us use it more frequently and pass it on to our children and grandchildren.

* * *

During my recent visit to the United States, my son, a doctor at Edward Hospital in Naperville, Illinois, mentioned that his Philippine Science High School (PSHS) class of 1977 was marking its 30th anniversary. When I was in government, I barely had the time to appreciate the role this secondary institute of learning has meant in the life of our country. I guess it is one of the many things we take for granted and which escape our attention given the issues and conflicts which we constantly face in our lives.

For those a bit tired of the daily fare being fed us by the media, let me just mention a few things about the PSHS.

The Philippine Science High School was established in 1963 during the administration of President Diosdado Macapagal. It offered on a free scholarship basis a secondary course with emphasis on subjects pertaining to science with the end in view to preparing students for a career in the field of science and technology.

Some lawmakers may rightfully claim credit for the establishment of the PSHS but the real father of the PSHS was Dr. Leopoldo Toralballa, a brilliant mathematician who received his training in science and technology at the University of the Philippines and at the University of Michigan. He also did post-doctoral work at Princeton.

Dr. Toralballa, who married the former Gloria Cortez, a UP summa cum laude graduate, had a son who studied at the Bronx High School of Science in New York City. The school had the reputation of being one of the finest science schools in the United States. Dr. Toralballa closely studied the system of education in this school and believed that the Philippines should have a similar institute for its highly talented children.

In the early 1960s, he lobbied at the highest levels of government for the creation of the school and when the legislation needed for such a project was passed, he served as its founding director.

From an original campus in Diliman, the system has since expanded to nine schools, the latest being in Argao, Cebu. The aim is to have one campus in every administrative region of the country.

The current officer-in-charge (for the last three years, if I may add) of the Diliman campus is Jessamyn Yazon, class of 1977 and a batchmate of my son. She has a Master's degree in biology from the University of British Columbia.

Jess Yazon comes from a family of achievers. A native of Butuan City, Agusan del Norte, she has two brothers and a sister, all of whom graduated from the PSHS: Dr. Glenn Yazon is a radiologist, Xennon Yazon is a fisheries graduate with his own consultancy firm for environmental monitoring and Dr. Amaryllis Yazon, an OB Gyne specialist. A sister-in-law, Lillibeth Yazon is also a PSHS graduate who finished in marine biology.

Some of our more prominent PSHS products are: Cielito Habito, a former Neda director-general; Ramon Jocson, former president of IBM Philippines and now head of its Asia-Pacific regional office; Reynaldo Vea, president of Mapua Institute of Technology; Vicente Romano III, head of the Black and White Movement; and just to balance things, Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr., AFP chief of staff. This is not to mention the hundreds of other outstanding alumni in the science and technology field who have consistently figured in awards for entrepreneurship, research programs and management work, not just in S&T, but also in other fields of endeavor. The nation continues to benefit from the free education provided by the PSHS system for our gifted children.

The annual budget of the Diliman campus comes up to about P75 million. Can you imagine if we used the P1.2 billion which was lost to graft and corruption by Comelec officials for additional support to the science school system? Or the P728 million siphoned off allegedly by Joc-Joc Bolante for illegal campaign funds for the administration? Or the P530-million overprice in the construction of the President Diosdado Macapagal Boulevard? Or the kickbacks that we would have had to pay for a national broadband network if it had not been exposed?

The great tragedy of our time is that so much of our resources have been diverted to the pockets of corrupt officials when we need every peso available for the education of our youth who remain, in the long run, the best hope of the nation.

* * *

The Puritan Airline—last Oct. 25 an Airbus 380, touted as the world's largest passenger aircraft and also "the quietest and most fuel-efficient," flew from Singapore to Sydney. Bearing the logo of Singapore Airlines, this A380 is configured to accommodate 471 passengers in three classes: 12 Singapore Airlines suites, 60 business class seats, and 399 economy class seats.

If one goes by the numerous advertisements that have come out in the last few weeks, the SIA A380 is the height of luxury and comfort for air passengers.

There's just one small restriction in this oasis of stylish air travel arrangements. According to an Australian, Tony Elwood, who flew with his wife in one of the first-class suites aboard the SIA inaugural flight, the carrier requested that passengers refrain from sex during the trip (Newsweek, Nov. 12 issue—Perspectives).

Luicito's amparo

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Carlos Isagani T. Zarate

"*TINUOD NA*, SIR (IT IS TRUE, SIR)," WAS THE repeated response made by 22-year-old farmer Luicito Bustamante to Davao City Regional Trial Court Executive Judge Isaac Robillo when he was confronted, paragraph by paragraph, on the contents of his supposed affidavit. The confrontation took place last Wednesday during the summary hearing on the petition for a writ of amparo filed by Luicito's mother on Nov. 7, 2007.

Luicito's mother, Bebelita, filed the writ of amparo more than a week after he was reported taken Oct. 27 by armed paramilitary men in the hinterlands of Paquibato, Davao City. The paramilitary group led by one Noli Obat, a leader of a religious sect, tagged Luicito as an NPA member.

During the court hearing, Bebelita was visibly distraught as the haggard-looking and visibly disturbed Luicito told Judge Robillo that he was a former NPA who voluntarily surrendered to the military through Obat. "*Bakak man na* (Those are lies)," Bebelita vehemently protested as her tears welled. Her son is an ordinary farmer, she asserted. Luicito's two friends, who were also present in court, also shook their heads in disbelief; they were with Luicito and saw that he was even crying when forcibly taken by Obat's group.

Luicito's affidavit, cleanly printed in English, was accompanied by Visayan translations. It was supposedly subscribed before a public prosecutor in Davao del Norte on Nov. 8—curiously, only a day after Judge Robillo granted the writ of amparo requiring the respondents, which included President Macapagal-Arroyo, AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon and several other military and police officials in the Davao region to produce the young farmer in court on Nov. 14.

On questioning by lawyers from the IBP-Davao City Chapter, Union of Peoples' Lawyers in Mindanao (UPLM) and Free Legal Assistance Group (FLAG), which acted as counsels of Bebelita, Luicito admitted that he can hardly read, even the Visayan translations of his affidavit. When asked who prepared his affidavit, Luicito pointed to a lawyer representing the military, who prepared it inside a military camp in Davao City.

Luicito was obviously under "duress." In fact, Sheriff Serge Tupas claimed that Luicito was presented as "detainee" to him by Obat when he served the writ of amparo.

The hearing lasted less than two hours. Judge Robillo then declared that Luicito can now "move freely" without further restrictions on his liberty and security.

Luicito initially declared he wanted to be under Obat's custody. Yet, after the hearing, when lawyer Manuel Quibod, IBP-Davao City president, thoroughly explained the extent of Judge Robillo's order, Luicito told his military escorts that he decided to be with his mother Bebelita. Quibod, by then, already knew why Luicito "changed" his decision.

Then, barely an hour after he regained his "freedom," Luicito showed to his mother, siblings and members of Karapatan the "real" reasons behind his court testimony: cigarette burn marks on his neck and back and his severely scarred ankles, which days before had been tied with wires.

He also recalled several occasions during his captivity that he was blindfolded and severely beaten by his captors. At one instance, the severe beatings caused him to urinate and defecate in his pants. Apparently the indignity done to him was not enough, he was also forced to swallow his own feces. He also recalled an instance where his head was wrapped with hot pepper-laced cellophane, causing a severe burning sensation on his nose, eyes and entire face, while he gasped for breath.

Luicito admitted that he was "too scared and confused," thus, he agreed to follow the instructions of his captors during the hearing of the writ. "They told me that I should tell the court what they wanted me to say so that no one gets hurt … but all that was said was not true." He was relating his ordeal by bits and pieces, at times in tears. He does not want to go back to their place, Luicito said, the trauma of his 20-day captivity sadly etched on his face.

Luicito's amparo application was the second one filed by the IBP, UPLM and FLAG in Mindanao, following the writ's introduction by the Supreme Court as a remedy for extra-judicial killings and enforced disappearances. The first one was filed in Pagadian City, which resulted in the release Nov. 7 of Ruel Muñasque, a leader of the Christian Youth Fellowship-United Church of Christ in the Philippines and Bayan Muna organizer, after 14 days in military custody. Just like Luicito, Muñasque initially claimed that he voluntarily surrendered to the military but later recanted in court.

Incidentally, Luicito's amparo application was filed and granted a day after Chief Justice Reynato Puno lectured judges, prosecutors, lawyers, police and military officials in Davao City on the significance of the writ in the protection of human rights. Puno also urged the public to "use amparo" because it is "free" since no docket fee is required.

Indeed, amparo turned out to be not only free but, more importantly, powerful enough to secure the freedom of Luicito and Ruel.

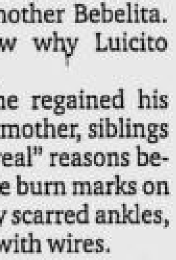
* * *

MINDANAO REGIONAL LAWYERS CONVENTION: The biennial Mindanao lawyers' convention hosted by the Integrated Bar of the Philippines is slated in Davao City on Nov. 21-23 at the NCCC Convention Hall, Maa, Davao City. Aside from plenary sessions to tackle the theme: "Katarungan sa Kinaiyahan; Kalinaw sa Mindanao," the convention also incorporates a two-day Mandatory Continuing Legal Education (MCLE) seminar. Davao-born Supreme Court Associate Justice Antonio T. Carpio is the convention's keynote speaker.

* * *

Comments at kar_laws@yahoo.com or karlos_z23@hotmail.com

The future's bright



THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

IN CEBU, THE AUGUSTINIAN RECOLLECTS HAVE no shortage of vocations or of students. The young men and women they educate at the University of San Jose-Recoletos have a reputation for being well-behaved and dependable. It was upon the initiative of one such person, Anna-Lyn Pepito, editor in chief of the student publication, The Forward, that I found myself in Cebu City, in order to interact with her staff, and as I discovered, with their educators and their fellow students from many other schools.

Of these student journalists, I'd met managing editor Jun Niño Nalipay and staff writer Jefferson Cruz earlier this year in Bacolod City during a student journalists' gathering at La Salle. On that occasion we'd hardly had a chance to talk; but apparently, I made enough of an impression for them to justify my being invited to their school. And so my first real exposure to the students of San Jose-Recoletos was through Rudyard James Lariosa, son of the noted Cebuano writer Ernesto Lariosa, and photographer Philip Dacera. Both managed to accompany Rev. Fr. Charlie Orobia, OAR and Rev. Fr. Amadeo Lucero, OAR, to the airport to pick me up.

I think the good friars—solid Filipino patriots, the both of them, and which is something I still have to remind myself isn't unusual for friars these days (underscored by my meeting the rest of them when we had lunch in their refectory the next day)—were a bit taken aback over the intensity of their students. As soon as they welcomed me and we were ensconced in the van, Rudyard began to systematically pick my brains: besides being a writer, he's a debater, and so every point of inquiry developed into a point of brisk, though friendly, contention. The more reserved Philip only weighed in when the finer points of literature and politics gave way to a more inclusive discussion of the creative process in general, and then he proved every bit as impassioned as the more voluble Rudyard.

In the jolly company of the friars and the two rather surprised students, we first engaged in one of my favorite activities when visiting Cebu, which is the systematic and unashamed consumption, in as large a quantity as is humanly possible, of seafood. After which we decamped (much to my pleasant surprise) to Jazz & Blues, where the presence of Korean and Japanese tourists made itself felt for the first time since my arrival.

Concern was over the impact on tourism—immediate and tangible—of the Glorietta blast and the bombing of the Batasan, and the effect of the appreciation of the peso, particularly the impact on exporters, and the subsequent closing of some businesses and the loss of livelihood this entailed in their employees, were what we discussed, particularly after we were joined by Francisco Japson, a consultant with the Osmeña administration. A man normally given to firing off wisecracks at machine-gun speed, he proceeded to focus our attention on the implications of the strong peso.

Much as the real estate market is booming, he said, it's the employees of exporters that represent long-term jobs outside the tourism industry and the still-infant call center firms. Yet national and local authorities seemed at a loss at how to protect them. A former OFW himself, Japson said that from personal experience he knows working overseas provided a lifeline for those at home; yet having returned and with his wife in politics, he also knows that what already existed, jobs, industries, couldn't be abandoned to the tender mercies of economic Darwinism.

The next day, after a whirlwind tour of the campus and a blur of courtesy calls, I finally got to spend time with the Forward staff. Anna-Lyn is an intense young lady with a gift for using show-biz lingo to put a gathering at ease; to my immense satisfaction it turned out she sets the direction of her paper by means of encouraging free and open debate.

Her regime is consensus-driven. With those I'd met before, and her other staffers, with whom I was interacting for the first time—Cleoward Sy, Floyd Ryan Yamyamin, Wellah Mingo, Cherie Ann Gozon, Amefil Benguillo, Rodulfo Guerrero Jr.—we engaged in a discussion on writing in general and the means they sought to express themselves, as students and citizens, in particular. Advisers Hazel Sevilla and Pacheco Polestico (whom I'd also met in Bacolod) represented the educators who apply themselves to mentoring talent here, at home.

These are students whose only advantages in life are diligence, supportive parents and institutional support by means of a partial scholarship because of their involvement in the school paper, and superior intellects and a reliable moral compass. Students, then, armed with everything that should matter, though each day is a struggle in a society in which these things seem to matter less and less.

During a presentation and open forum sponsored by The Forward, and attended by high school and college student leaders from other schools in Cebu, the students themselves took pains to insist they weren't apathetic, but had yet to find people they could believe in. One plaintively asked, after my talk, "Tell us, who should we believe?" I reminded her of the substance of my talk: engage in learning to think critically, in relishing what Teodoro M. Locsin said was the necessity of exercising the freedom to study, to think, and only then, express one's self—and observe the goings-on around them. Only then, I told her, will you know whom to believe, and best of all, you would then be prepared to take on the responsibilities of a creative, and not destructive, new kind of leadership.

As always, my feelings after any visit to Cebu are intense: we can see the future, and it is bright. The builders of the New Philippines are already hard at work; and whatever they create can only be better than what we have, now.

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Dulce, a luminescent star

FATE CAN BE SO CRUEL AT TIMES. LOVING life, Dulce Q. Saguisag strove to live it by battling breast cancer and successfully fending off death when it came knocking a few years ago. Now she is dead because of a driver's recklessness.

We, her immediate staff during her short stint as social welfare secretary, often shared with her noontime moments of gaiety, when she would laugh the loudest. I remember us watching her husband appear on television in January 2001, as he knocked at Malacañang's gate to aid a fallen president and friend. We laughed until tears swelled in our eyes—*Ito talagang si* Saguisag. Dramatic entrance *nga*, wrong timing *naman*!

Dulce told us stories about her husband, which we would rather take with us to the grave. That is a vow under pain of death, so Rene Saguisag need not worry about us ribbing him about them.

We, whose lives Dulce touched one way or another, will miss her very much. We now have, however, a luminescent star to guide us at night when we may join her quixotic husband tilt with the windmills. Goodbye, Ms S., we shall always remember you when we see angels on earth, the kind you loved to gather.

—ARCHIMEDES S. MARQUEZ,
420 Gov. A. Pascual St.,
San Jose, Navotas City

If NPC is apolitical, why GMA for special guest?

IT IS VERY UNFORTUNATE THAT THE National Press Club allowed itself to be used and become a willing party to the curtailment of the freedom of the press and freedom of expression.

If indeed the NPC wants to remain apolitical, why of all people did it invite Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo as special guest? Today, the NPC stands for "Nag Pa Cipcip" (played sycophant) to GMA, the "Pinoy Big Briber."

—JERRY CENTRO,
jerrycentro@yahoo.com

Obscure road signs, dangerous traffic hazard

INQUIRER'S NOV. 11 EDITORIAL, TITLED "Tragic reminder," resonated so much with my sentiments about "road realities" here in the Philippines, particularly in Metro Manila.

Oftentimes, I also wonder what the people who put up the road signs are really up to. Are they really concerned about the safety of motorists and the public? Or are they concerned only about collecting fines?

Early one morning, I was stopped by an MMDA traffic enforcer along Ortigas Avenue for making a U-turn at the intersection right after Meralco Theater coming from Edsa. The traffic enforcer himself told me that a lot of motorists had already been caught for the same violation and had also complained about the obscure No U-turn sign. But sad to say, until then, nothing was being done about it.

Who will not be confused when you see at an intersection, right in front of you, the road sign "Keep this intersection clear," only to discover in the next second that there is a "No U-turn" sign a meter away from the intersection? Moreover, the supposedly international "No U-turn" sign is colored blue and black. Such signs, which are hardly noticeable, not only add to traffic hazards but could also reduce the number of productive years in many Filipino lives.

I told the MMDA traffic enforcer to issue me the ticket, so I could personally talk to MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando himself about the problematic road sign. He changed his mind and in the end he didn't give me one. I told him that I wasn't going to give him any money just in case he was waiting for me to do so. He let me go.

This is just one distressing reality in our cities which could be easily resolved if only the concerned officials are properly trained on road safety and work sincerely for the safety of the public.

Of course, I agree with the editorial: motorists/drivers should have the proper training/knowledge and should follow traffic regulations, including road signs.

—SR. REVY SANTIAGO, SJBP,
sgbpnovitiate@yahoo.com.ph

Yes, lapses must be corrected, promptly

GOD BLESS THE INQUIRER AND ITS STAFF and reporters for the front-page article "PDI apologizes for error in Manila solon's story." (INQUIRER, 10/19/07) That was, in effect, an implied but a definite rebuke for someone who has allegedly become numb to criticism.

To the INQUIRER, "respect for the truth also means if we are wrong, we correct it promptly."

—ISIDORO A. PANLASIGUI JR.,
6 Big Horseshoe Drive,
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Blaming Abus was convenient for probers

From page A1

staged following a tip.

The Abu Sayyaf link to the bombing was discounted by former Basilan Rep. Gerry Salapuddin, a political rival of Akbar.

Salapuddin has denied involvement in the bombing, knowing that Akbar's relatives would tend to blame his political foes. At the same time, Salapuddin, a former commander of the Moro National Liberation Front, has claimed one of the suspects, Ikram Indama, was his personal driver.

He said he knew the suspects and those killed in the gunfight. "I would never imagine that anyone of them would be Abu Sayyaf," he said.

Evidence

Police have recovered evidence, a House ID, showing Ikram Indama as Salapuddin's driver. Salapuddin has admitted that Indama was "my driver for more or less three years," but "as far I know, he was never an Abu Sayyaf."

The Abu Sayyaf involvement was one of the first theories worked on by the police. Their theory was that the bombing was Abu Sayyaf payback for Akbar's accusation that Abu Sayyaf terrorists had beheaded government troops in Basilan in July. Police pursued this lead when staging the raid at Payatas.

Police received public/ applause for the swiftness of the "solution," in contrast to the Glorietta 2 explosion four weeks ago, which did not fit into the terrorist bombing scenario. That investigation got bogged down on the industrial accident explanation which did not fit the terrorist bombing formula.

In the Batasan bombing, police had no hesitation from the start to conclude it was a terrorist-related attack. They appeared so certain they were on the right track, there was no other way but the Abu Sayyaf route.

Public weariness

It was a solution that played into the hands of public weariness with the Islamic terrorist-related violence in the country.

The public appears to have accepted the explanation without too much skepticism, having been conditioned to accept for the past three decades that any bombing attack in the country could only come from the "usual suspects"—communist or Islamic terrorists and, recently, almost always the Abu Sayyaf.

After the Philippines joined the US-led coalition in the war on Islamic-related terrorism in the wake of the Sept. 11, 2001, bombing of the World Trade Center buildings in New York, Philippine security authorities have targeted organizations on the terror lists of the United States and the European Union.

The campaign against communist terrorists has received impetus in the policy of the Arroyo administration to end the 39-year communist insurgency by the end of her presidency in 2010.

In this campaign, up to 800 leftist activists associated with communist "front organizations" have been killed in a government-initiated terror campaign blamed by human rights organizations and the United Nations Human Rights Commission on death squads linked to some rabidly anticommunist segments of the security forces.

Anticommunist drive

This broader aspect of the antiterrorist campaign is not the focus of the government's effort to find a scapegoat for the Batasan bombing. It would prefer that the public ignore the death squad killings because scapegoats cannot be found among the members of the security forces.

Although the PNP has swiftly declared the Batasan bombing solved, it hesitated to consider it "closed," meaning that it was not shutting its eyes to other alternative explanations.

Even if it pursues the investigation into the involvement of Salapuddin in the bombing, such a direction leads into the explanation that the bombing was no more than an upshot of Basilan vendetta politics. Salapuddin was representative of Basilan before Akbar.

The PNP cannot be as enthusiastic in pursuing the Basilan politics angle as it was in exploring the Abu Sayyaf link because that inquiry does not promise pay dirt. The PNP has already gained a public relations coup from the Payatas raid.

Public clamor

It has satisfied a public clamor for results and for blood. With the killing of the three alleged Abu Sayyaf terrorists in the raid, the group has been painted as a public enemy. It is easy to make them scapegoats.

Not so long ago, the swashbuckling Abu Sayyaf leader, Abu Sabaya, was gunned down by naval commandos in the Sulu Sea. His death was hailed as the biggest breakthrough in the counterterrorism campaign in the country. Did it make the Batasan safe from Abu Sabaya's cohorts?

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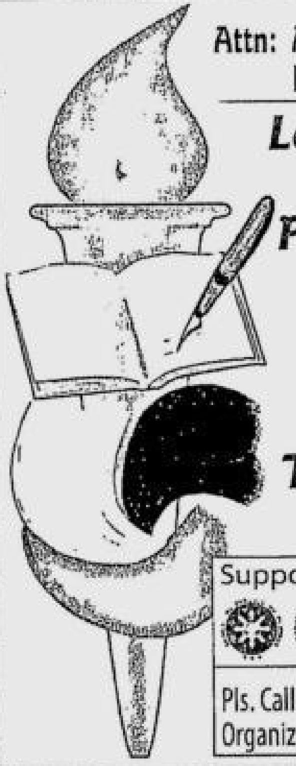
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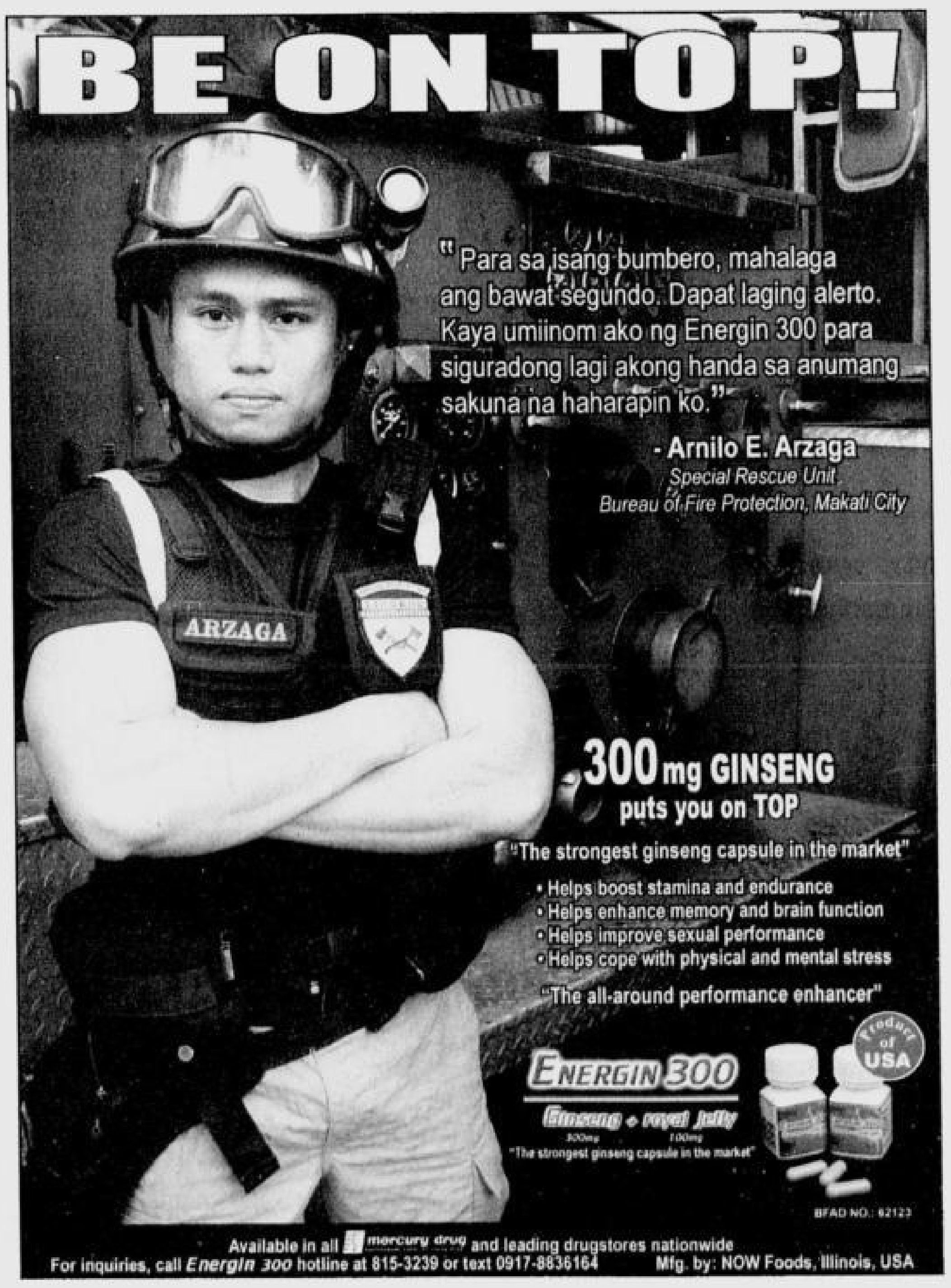
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Solons support interfaith probe of blast

By TJ Burgonio

ANAK MINDANAO PARTY-LIST REP. MUJIV Hataman yesterday backed a Muslim leader's proposal to form an interfaith body to investigate Tuesday's bombing at the Batasan driveway that killed Basilan Rep. Wahab Akbar and three others.

"Of course, it's better to have an independent interfaith [probe]. That would be a big help in finding out the truth," said the congressman, who had admitted that one of the slain suspects was a distant relative.

Davao City Rep. Prospero Nograles agreed: "If there is a serious clamor for it, then I have no serious objections."

Hataman, however, stressed that any independent investigation by another body should be conducted parallel to the investigation of the Philippine National Police.

"If there will be a conflict in the results of the two investigations, let the public form their own opinion," he said in a phone interview.

Nasser Marohomsalic, convenor of the Philippine Council for Islam and Democracy (PCID), on Saturday proposed the creation of a body composed of leaders from different faiths to look into the blast in view of the PNP's tendency to blame Muslims for crimes.

Police theory doubted

Muslim leaders doubted the police theory that the bombing was an offshoot of political rivalries in Basilan, and said this could be part of a scenario preparatory to the full implementation of the antiterror law.

Amina Rasul, who is also a PCID convenor, proposed that the government tap foreign experts to help the police investigate the Batasan bombing, as it did in the Glorietta mall blast, in view of some people's lack of confidence in the police's impartiality.

"Let's see how they're able to assuage the people that the investigation will be impartial," she said.

Hataman, who has been linked to Akbar's killing by a relative, said he was cooperating with the police investigation and would show up at Camp Crame today to clear his name.

"I don't have to wait for their invitation. I will tell them I don't have anything to do with it," said Hataman. He went to the police headquarters on Friday but was told to come back with a lawyer today.

Hataman reiterated that Redwan Indama, one of the slain alleged ASG members, was a distant relative, but said that he had no personal information if he indeed was a member of the kidnapping group.

He said he had also started taking security measures after a sport utility vehicle was seen in his neighborhood, asking about him.

Palace official clears Akbar's political foe

From page A1

volvement in the killing of Akbar, but has admitted that Indama was his former driver and that Awnal was a brother-in-law he had helped get employed as a porter at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia).

Police have found from Indama an ID presumably issued when Salapuddin was a congressman. Witnesses also reported seeing a vehicle with the license plate 8 of a congressman at the house that was raided in Payatas.

Salapuddin, who lost to Akbar's wife in the gubernatorial race in the May elections in Basilan, also has identified the Indama couple as former MNLF members.

"At this point, Congressman Salapuddin is not a suspect," said Director General Avelino Razon of the Philippine National Police. "Unless we can get evidence or testimony to point to his complicity in this case, then we can say that he is a suspect."

Razon said the three suspects under custody had not named the mastermind but they had admitted that the target of the Batasan attack was Akbar.

Ermita, who helped negotiate Salapuddin's surrender in 1984, said the Moro leader was a "success story in the government's rebel returnee program."

ERMITA

SALAPUDDIN

Speaking to reporters at Naia before departure ceremonies for President Macapagal-Arroyo, who left for the 13th Association of Southeast Asian Nations Leaders' summit in Singapore, Ermita said Salapuddin had called him from Basilan two days ago.

He said Salapuddin denied involvement in the Akbar killing and that he was flying to Manila because he feared for his life in the hands of Akbar's followers.

Aside from Akbar, two congressional aides and a driver died in the bombing. Several others, including Rep. Henry Teves and Gabriela party-list Rep. Luzviminda Ilagan, remain in the hospital after suffering injuries in the blast.

Barias said it was up to the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) to assess the statement submitted by Salapuddin on Saturday.

Barias told the INQUIRER that the mastermind and motive for the killing were still the subject of investigation.

This, he said, was what the police meant when they said that the Batasan bombing was "solved but not closed," when asked by the INQUIRER to explain the statement.

"It means that we entertain that we have the perpetrators in our hands and we have a clear picture of what happened in Batasan. We are sure that Congressman Akbar was the target," Barias said.

"But we are still digging deeper to determine the other personalities involved in the killing and the motive," he said.

Akbar's wife, Basilan Gov. Jum Akbar, yesterday filed a two-page formal complaint of four counts of murder against the three suspects.

She was accompanied to the CIDG-NCR office by lawyer Sigfried Fortun who said that the complaint basically stated how she found out how her husband died and her "reliance on the investigation of the CIDG-NCR," as well as her intention to press charges.

The governor's complaint-affidavit is to be used by the police as the basis for the formal filing of criminal charges.

'Eavesdroppers' stalk media at coup hearing

From page A1

seemed more interested in taking footage of the reporters than of anyone else.

Had the military become paranoid and unleashed spies on journalists covering the court-martial hearings of alleged coup plotters in Camp Capinpin in Tanay, Rizal?

Four men with the build, stance and even the standard haircut of soldiers lurked around media people during Friday's hearing, spooking and annoying them.

"It made me feel uncomfortable because I noticed one of them was following our every move," a veteran reporter told the INQUIRER, asking not to be identified because he said he didn't want to invite controversy to himself.

He suspected the men were intelligence agents.

He said it was the first time in his nearly 10 years of covering the defense beat that he noticed the presence of men in a court-martial hearing fitting the profile of spies.

The reporter, however, surmised the men could have been under orders to monitor the journalists because earlier, during a routine check at the camp entrance, a bomb-sniffing dog had sat on his backpack, suggesting there might have been an explosive device in the bag.

A thorough check of the reporter's bag showed no bomb or explosive device.

Reporters noticed the men during Friday's court-martial hearing of 28 Marine and Army Scout Ranger officers, led by Maj. Gen. Renato Miranda and Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim, who were charged with mutiny for allegedly plotting to overthrow the Arroyo administration.

At first, some journalists thought they were also reporters as they had with them sheets of paper and pens, and they took down notes.

Another man even had a handheld video camera.

But curiously, the shots he took were those of the reporters in the courtroom and in the media registration area before the hearing began.

The media's suspicions were aroused when the men averted their eyes when reporters looked at them.

Neither did they interact with them as colleagues normally would, nor did they join in the interviews with defense lawyers.

But the men were especially alert when the journalists spoke to the accused officers—they made sure they were within earshot of the conversations.

Apparently accused Marine Col. Achilles Segumalian also sensed the presence of the "eavesdroppers."

Nearly 6 feet tall with a booming voice, Segumalian taunted one of them.

"You're with the INQUIRER, aren't you? You can put what happened here in the headline, can't you?" Segumalian said in Filipino, grinning.

He was referring to the wrangling between defense and prosecution lawyers over a legal point during the hearing.

The man could not answer Segumalian and backed off, unfortunately stepping on the toes of Rio Rose Ribaya of the Manila Bulletin.

"They did an insulting, mediocre imitation of us," Ribaya laughed.

Ribaya said the men could not even say which news organization they belonged to.

At the media holding area adjacent to the courtroom, the men and a couple of soldiers in uniform looked over the shoulders of INQUIRER chief photographer Ernie Sarmiento and photographer Edwin Bacasmas while they were transmitting photos on their laptops.

Reporters watching the scene said the INQUIRER photographers looked disconcerted—but unrattled.

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Solons support interfaith probe of blast

By TJ Burgonio

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'Eavesdroppers' stalk media at coup hearing

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RETAKE OF PRECEDING FRAME

Life just too cruel for Conde

From page A1

ees accosted the owner, 65-year-old Jose Hernandez, who even tried to load the crippled horse into a jeepney.

"It's not every day that you see a horse collapse in front of your office. Seeing the owner force the horse to get up was too much and one just had to intervene," said editor Aries Espinosa, one of the employees who first rushed to the scene and called a veterinarian.

According to the responding staff of Modomo Veterinary Clinic in Makati, the horse which was pulling a sulky and heading for the Philippine Racing Club at the Sta. Ana Race Track, was malnourished and severely dehydrated. A sulky is a lightweight, two-wheeled cart usually pulled by a horse or dogs.

"The condition of Conde is so despicable. Yes, the horse is already old with his hind legs showing evidence of fractures. But the evidence is clear that the owner was maltreating the horse," said Dr. Percy Modomo, who used up eight bottles of dextrose to revive the fallen horse.

Irreversible

But in the end, Modomo decided to put Conde to sleep as his condition was irreversible. The doctor volunteered to take the body for safekeeping and later informed the INQUIRER that it would be buried in his farm in Lipa City in Batangas.

Rebutting the veterinarian's claim, Hernandez insisted that he was taking good care of his horse which he claimed he had sold but bought back a few months ago.

Hernandez, who failed to show a registration for the horse, said he sold Conde several years ago for P20,000.

"Conde became a sulky racer and had different owners. When his last owner realized that he no longer needed the horse and voiced his intention to have Conde slaughtered, I decided to buy the horse back for P5,000 three months ago," said Hernandez, who left the scene with the sulky after realizing he could no longer take his horse home.

According to a source who refused to give his name, Hernandez used Conde as a form of transport from his stable on Mojica Street in Bangkal, Makati, to other places in the city but more often to the Sta. Ana Race Track, just a few blocks away from the INQUIRER office.

Slaughterhouse

"But he told me of his plan to eventually slaughter Conde because he was already old and sickly," said the source, who added that Hernandez had a slaughterhouse in his stable.

According to Mona Consunji of the Animal Welfare Coalition (AWC), a horse may be considered a food animal but there should be a process that must be strictly followed in slaughtering. The slaughterhouse should also be licensed.

Consunji rushed to the scene after she was informed of Conde's plight and assisted the horse during his last hours.

Responding authorities, PO2 Rory Jay Fernandez and PO1 Richard Calalay of the Makati police, said they would investigate the slaughterhouse in Bangkal that Hernandez owns.

Hernandez could be held liable for Conde's fate under the Philippine Animal Welfare Act, which makes it unlawful for any person to torture, to neglect to provide adequate care, sustenance or shelter, or maltreat any animal, including horses.

Several motorists who saw Conde along Malugay Street that afternoon already noted that the horse was limping. Bystanders also noted that Conde was already on his knees as he was nearing the INQUIRER office.

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Should you have any questions on the foregoing, you may get in touch with Ms. Melody del Rosario through telephone number (632) 888-0888.

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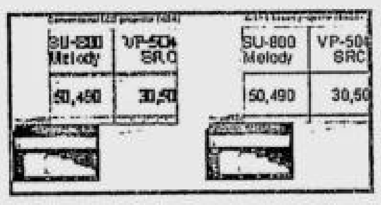

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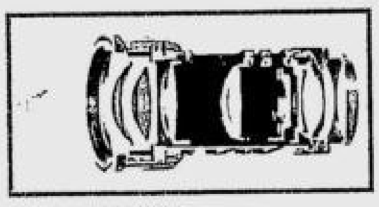

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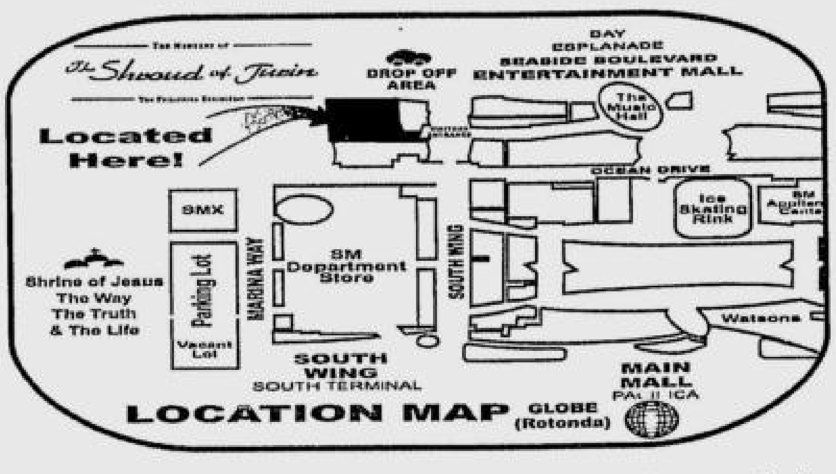

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WAITING FOR ERAP

NIÑA CATHERINE CALLEJA/INQUIRER SOUTHERN LUZON

Pagsanjan Central School pupils were required to welcome former President Joseph Estrada even on a Saturday. Pagsanjan, the hometown of Estrada's great grandfather, Emilio Ejercito, is headed by Mayor Emilio Ramon "ER" Ejercito Estregan.

Davao road seen to help illegal loggers

CITY OF MATI—A GOVERNMENT-funded road project in the villages of Cabuaya and Macambol here has paved the way for illegal loggers, according to an environment official.

Romeo Torres, the community environment and natural resources officer, said operators of illegal logging were "very happy" at the ongoing road construction "because it makes their operation smooth.

"They can now use 10-wheeler trucks to transport the illegally cut logs from these villages," he said.

Torres said that before the road was built in the two villages, the illegal loggers had been having a hard time transporting the logs.

"They had to use motorized pump boats to transport the logs. Now, it has become easier for them to transport their logs because of a P40-million road project in these two villages," he said.

He and other officials of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources were planning to ask the provincial government to stop the construction of the road connecting Barangays Macambol and Cabuaya, he said.

"This is a project of former Gov. Maria Elena Palma Gil. Now that she's out of office, we can request the incumbent governor, Corazon Malanyaon, to stop construction because the project only worsens the illegal logging problem here," Torres said.

He described the road project as "half done."

Last week, DENR personnel sought the assistance of the military and police "to stop an Isuzu truck fully loaded with illegally cut logs from Barangay Macambol."

"We are not so stupid as to pick a fight with these illegal loggers because they are heavily armed," Torres said. *Ferdinand Zuasola, Inquirer Mindanao*

Renewed logging in Samar suspended

By TJ Burgonio

ENVIRONMENT SECRETARY LITO ATIENZA HAS ordered the suspension of a new permit issued by his predecessor to a big-time firm to resume logging in more than 50,000 hectares in Samar.

Atienza hastily issued the order on Nov. 17 to stop Basey Wood Industries (Baswood) from resuming operations on the island after an 18-year moratorium on logging.

Then Environment Secretary Angelo Reyes issued the order, dated June 21, allowing Baswood to resume cutting trees in the area covered by its timber licensing agreement (TLA).

The order, however, was received by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources regional office only last week.

"We are [very] concerned about climate change and I can't find any logic why we should allow the cutting of trees on such a massive scale," Atienza said over the phone yesterday.

"Here we are encouraging everybody to plant trees, climbing mountains, going to the remotest barangays, then we hear something like this. This is alarming. How do we educate the people if they hear about the DENR cutting trees?" he said.

Atienza, who took over Reyes' post in August, said that he would strictly implement the selective log ban earlier enforced in Samar and elsewhere.

"Not in my administration will that (tree-cutting) happen. I'm going to put out the general intention of the log ban. We will strictly enforce it to the letter. We have a law, let's implement it to the fullest," he said.

Reyes' order extending Baswood's TLA by six more years virtually lifted the logging moratorium in Samar, according to DENR regional officials.

Baswood's operations were halted in 1989 when the government declared the moratorium. Its TLA covered a concession area of 57,525 ha, and was effective from 1971 to 1995.

The six-year extension would allow the firm to cut the same amount of timber that it failed to cut during the ban.

Atienza said Baswood's permit would be reviewed in a "transparent" process to determine if it was justified to resume cutting timber on the island.

Ricardo Tomol, DENR technical director for forest protection, said Baswood's area had been reduced by 30 percent since 70 percent is part of the Samar Island Natural Park, a protected area.

NEWSBRIEFS

3 die in Laguna digging site

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—Three persons died of suffocation while digging for treasures inside a tunnel in a residential area in Biñan, Laguna, on Nov. 13.

Laguna police director Senior Supt. Felipe Rojas Jr. said the fatalities—Apolinario Samiano, 35, his brother Bonifacio, 28, and Percival Deldago, 42—were tricycle drivers and construction workers moonlighting as treasure hunters.

He said relatives of the victims told investigators that the three were digging for treasures supposedly buried by Japanese soldiers at the end of World War II.

The victims used crude tools in their treasure hunting, which they started more than a month ago.

"The victims were not trained diggers or miners," he said in a mobile phone interview.

Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Ex-Tagaytay councilor shot dead

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—Two motorcycle-riding men shot dead a former councilor, who belonged to the most influential political clan in Tagaytay City, in front of his house on Nov. 14, police said.

Emmanuel Tolentino, 51, a real estate broker and former city councilor, died at the Asian Medical Hospital in Alabang, Muntinlupa City.

Mayor Bambol Tolentino, a cousin of Emmanuel, said the victim left politics in the late 1980s after he lost in his reelection bid as councilor.

Cavite police director Senior Supt. Fidel Posadas said Tolentino was outside his house in Barangay Sungay West at 11:25 a.m. when the gunmen suddenly appeared and shot him at close range.

Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Bus overturns; 12 people hurt

TUMAUINI, Isabela—At least 12 people were hurt on Nov. 13 when a bus bound for Tuguegarao City overturned along the national highway in Barangay Lalauanan here, said Tumauini police chief Senior Insp. Andres Baccay.

The driver of the Nelbusco bus, Roy Borja, lost control of the steering wheel when he tried to avoid a tricycle crossing an intersection. The bus, which came from Santiago City, hit a waiting shed before it overturned in front of the Lalauanan High School, police said.

The victims, including Borja, were taken to different hospitals in Isabela and nearby provinces.

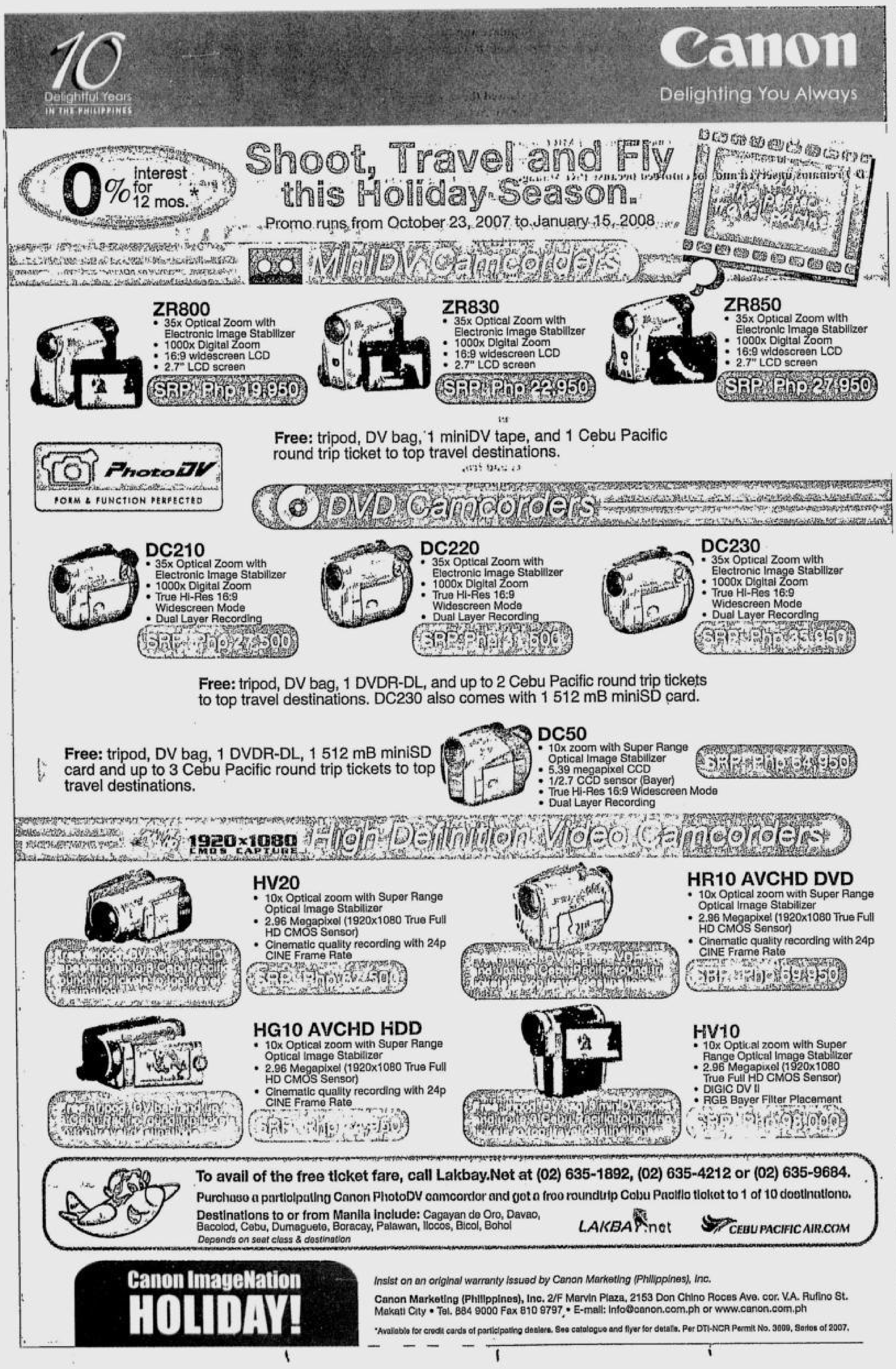
Villamor Visaya Jr., Inquirer Northern Luzon

Bulacan remembers Gregorio del Pilar

BULAKAN, BULACAN—The 132nd birth anniversary of Gen. Gregorio del Pilar was commemorated on Nov. 14 in Barangay San Jose here with street dancing, wreath-offering and flag-raising rites.

Del Pilar, the youngest general in the Philippine Revolutionary Forces during the Philippine Revolution and the Philippine-American War, was born on Nov. 14, 1875, to Fernando H. del Pilar and Felipa Sempio of San Jose town. He was the nephew of propagandist Marcelo H. del Pilar.

Del Pilar distinguished himself as a field commander while fighting Spanish garrisons in Bulacan.



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AN OPEN LETTER
TO

HER EXCELLENCY GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
TO ADDRESS THE PICOP RESOURCES INCORPORATED'S
(PICOP) ABUSES AND ECONOMIC SABOTAGE FROM CONCERNED SURIGAONONS AND INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

November 19, 2007

Dear Madame President:

The religious community and the concerned sectoral groups (of indigenous communities, farmers, workers, fisher-folks, businessmen, etc.) of Bislig City, Surigao del Sur, urgently request for your executive remedial and/or investigative attention – to the **ECONOMIC SABOTAGE** that the **PICOP** has systematically resorted to in the commercial utilization of the forest products/resources from the **21,680-hectare timberland granted to it by the government under the Integrated Forest Management Agreement (IFMA) 35, Timber License Agreement (TLA) 43** and **Pulpwood and Timber Licensing Agreement PTLA 47** – exemplified by the following abuses and/or violations, namely:

1. **UNABATED ON-GOING ILLEGAL LOGGING activities within areas covered by IFMA 35, TLA 43 and PTLA 47 owing to:**

   (a) lack of the requisite Environment Compliance Certificate(ECC), **(b)** absence and/or violation of Annual Integrated Operation Plan (AIOP), **(c)** lack or non-observance of 5-Year Forest Protection Program and 7-Year Reforestation Plan, especially, to the area covered by TLA 43, **(d)** indiscriminate destructive cutting of trees within TLA 43, by expanding the illegal logging operations to the watershed areas at Barangays Mone and Burboanan, the setting of Tinuy-an Falls; **(e)** violations of the terms and conditions of the Transition Development Management Plan (TDMP), which the DENR had granted to PRI to cut trees within the expired TLA 43, pending its conversion into IFMA, **(f)** farming out of license to private contractors, and **(g)** deceptive expansion of concession areas to the A & D areas by using the unapproved BFFR demarcation lines between the timberland and the A & D areas, instead of the LC Map 2468 demarcation lines.

   The tree stumps of the felled logs for the year 2006 – 2007 within the afore-stated watershed areas will attest to this fact.

   Incidentally, **TLA 43 expired on April 25, 2002**, while **PTLA 47 expired on February 7, 2006. IFMA 35 will soon expire on December 31, 2007.** PRI has applied for conversion of the expired TLA 43 into IFMA, which application was not acted favorably by former DENR Secretary Heherson Alvarez, an action upheld by the **Supreme Court** in a case **(G.R. No. 162243) per Decision promulgated November 29, 2006.**

2. **UNABATED ON-GOING SHIPMENT OF RAW LOGS DIRECT FROM THE TIMBERLAND CUTTING AREAS OUT OF BISLIG CITY, instead of processing the same into finished products (i.e. lumber, veneer and plywood) in PRI's plants at Tabon, Bislig City, PRI having been established as a wood-based industry. Thus, depriving employment to thousands of people in Bislig City, and depriving further the City of Bislig with revenues.**

   PRI has closed its Lumber, Veneer and Plywood Plants about 12 years ago but keeps on harvesting the **native grown Dipterocarp trees** from the **expired TLA 43 and PTLA 47.**

3. **OPERATING WITHOUT BUSINESS PERMIT, NOT PAYING REAL PROPERTY TAXES, FOREST CHARGES AND OTHER FEES DUE TO THE GOVERNEMNT in utilizing the natural forest products, as well as not paying its long overdue accumulated obligations on customs duties. THUS, PRI IS MORE OF LIABLITY RATHER THAN AN ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTOR TO THE COFFERS OF THE LOCAL TREASURY.**

   Lately, **PRI has been operating** its paper manufacturing plants without a business permit. **Neither does it pay local business taxes** (i.e., real property taxes, etc.) which would amount already to **Php 59,000,000.00**, more or less, as of June 2007.

   The **Supreme Court's Decision in G.R. No. 162243** mentioned the fact that **PRI has failed to pay regular forest charges, interest, penalties and surcharges and silvicultural fees amounting to Php 167,592,440.90 as of 30 August 2002.** For the period January 2001 to December 30, 2005, PRI has **accumulated unpaid customs duties and taxes** with the **Bureau of Customs** in the amount of **Php 249,980,763.00.** By now, the foregoing liabilities appear to have **not been paid or settled and have increased significantly.**

4. **VIOLATIONS OF WORKERS' RIGHTS TO JUST AND UP TO DATE COMPENSATIONS as well as to their BASIC RIGHTS and FRINGE BENEFITS under the COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT, LABOR CODE and other allied social legislations:**

   a) by presently **delaying the payment of salaries of its regular and casual employees** from 75 to 90 days from date of close of payroll period to date of payment, thus forcing the oppressed workers to have their semi-monthly payroll discounted by some members of PRI Administrative Staff.; b) by **rehiring of casuals, as casuals, after a break of 2 – 3 days every six months**, and c) by **rehiring of contractual workers, as contractual workers, after a break of 2 – 3 days**, thus, some casual employees and contractual employees remain in status as such casual/contractual workers for 5 – 10 years.

   The foregoing is in addition to the fact that the workers have yet to receive their 13th – month pay for the year 2006, not to mention the fact that the **workers have not been given salary increases for about ten (10) years already.** There are instances where a casual utility employee of the City Hall of Bislig City receives more than a regular employee of the PRI.

5. **VIOLATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL LAWS ON AIR AND WATER POLLUTION that caused health problems to the populace and the rising cases of cancer incidents in Bislig City.** The pollution of the air and sea water coming from the paper plants of PRI have caused the rising cases of cancer in the locality according to the findings of Dr. Victorio B. Molina of the College of Public Health – Department of Environmental and Occupational Health, University of the Philippines-Manila.

   The **Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) of Region XIII confirmed the pollution.** The result of Stack Sampling Test showed **the concentration of the Particulate Matter emission is 623.56 mg/Ncm, exceeding the DENR Standard 150 mg/Ncm** as provided for under Article 3, section 19 of RA 8749 of Philippine Clear Air Act of 1999.

   A case was filed with the Pollution Adjudication Board (PAB) at the National Office Visayas Avenue, Quezon City by EMB Caraga Region XIII because of such violation. This case was decided on March 29, 2006 ordering the PRI to complete the construction of its Water Treatment Facilities and comply with the standards for all applicable parameters set forth by the DENR. PRI failed to comply, thus, it was issued a **Cease and Desist Order (CDO)** by PAB on **November 29, 2006.** The **CDO remains unserved and not enforced because PRI Managers refused the government enforcers to get inside its plant.** PRI raised the CDO to the Office of the President and managed to secure a Stay Order of the CDO implementation. **By this Stay Order coming no less from the Office of the President, the pollution caused by PRI plants to Bislig City remains unabated.**

6. **VIOLATIONS OF THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE'S RIGHTS TO THEIR CLAIM UNDER IPRA LAW (R.A. No. 8371) OF THEIR ANCESTRAL DOMAIN within IFMA 35, TLA 43 and PTLA 47.**

   PRI encroaches and controls the ancestral domain of the IPs in spite of its **expired TLA 43 and PTLA 47. PRI seeks conversion of TLA No. 43 into IFMA without the FREE AND PRIOR INFORMED AND WRITTEN CONSENT OF THE IPs/ICCs concerned** in their respective CADC, CADT, which violates **Section 59, RA 8371(IPRA Law).** This violation is one reason why the Supreme Court upheld former DENR Secretary Heherson Alvarez in disapproving PRI's Application for Conversion of TLA 43 into IFMA.

   The League of United Manobo, Mamanwa and Mandaya of Agusan, Davao and Surigao (LUMMMADS), amidst PRI's disregard of their right, had passed several resolutions, namely:

   (a) Resolution No. 06-01-061, requesting the National Chairman of the Commission on Indigenous People, the Hon. Jannette C. Serrano, **to help fast track the CADC and CADT applications of the LUMMMADS as well as to protect their ancestral domain** from the encroachment of PRI and its logging contractors, **(b) Resolution No. 06-01-062**, requesting the **Philippine National Police Director General Arturo Lumibao to investigate the killings of members of the LUMMMADS within the PRI concessions stretching the provinces of Davno Oriental, Compostela Valley, Agusan del Sur, Surigao del Sur, (c) Resolution No. 06-01-063**, requesting the Good **General Generoso Senga, Chief of Staff, to abolish the Special Civilian Auxiliary Army (SCAA) organized by PRI, (d) Resolution No. 04, Series of 2006**, requesting the **NCIP and DENR Secretaries to implement fully the Supreme Court Decision in G.R. No. 162243, (e) Resolution No. 01, Series of 2007**, requesting the National Commission on Indigenous People (NCIP) **Chairman Jannette C. Serrano, the Secretary of the DENR, Hon. Angelo Reyes, through the NCIP Regional Director Atty. Jake Dumagan to enforce Republic 8371, known as IPRA Law, by delineating and excluding the CADC, CALT, & CAD (known as Ancestral Domain) from the expired TLA 43 and IFMA 35 of PRI and from the Western Mahogany IFM # 01; and to deputize the Indigenous People in guarding their respective CADC and CADT including the areas excluded from the PRI concession by virtue of the Supreme Court's Decision in G.R. No.162243**, and **(f) Resolution No. 02, Series of 2007**, requesting the **Department of Interior and Local Government Secretary Ronaldo Puno and Her Excellency President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, through the Regional NCIP Atty. Jake Dumagan, to enforce the Republic Act No. 8371, by delineating and excluding the CADC and CADT from PRI's expired TLA 43, IFMA 35 and Western Mahogany IFMA # 01.**

Hence, PRI, under its present management is more of an economic liability than a blessing to Bislig City and the neighboring provinces. PRI undermines the existence of the indigenous communities and the right to share the patrimony of the nation. It does not provide enough employment to the people. It destroys the forest and pollutes the atmosphere and the surroundings. It defies legal authorities and violates our laws with impunity. It exists as if it owns the natural resource to plunder beyond the reach of the law.

Thus, the **Supreme Court pronounced in G.R. No. 162243** that: **"PICOP has been fortunate to have been awarded an enormous concession area and thus, a huge chunk of benefits of this country's natural resources. Attached to this fortune is the responsibility to comply with the laws and regulations implementing the stated legislative policies of the environmental preservation and benefit distribution. These laws and regulations should not be ignored, and the courts should not condone such blatant disregard by those who believe they are above the law because of their sizable investments and significant number of workers employed…The judicial policy of nurturing prosperity would be better served by granting such concessions to someone who will abide by the law."**

Incidentally, the total area of Bislig City is 40,530 hectares, and 21, 680 hectares of which is covered by TLA 43 of PRI and the remaining 21,680 hectares is alienable and disposable upon which about 91,000 people of Bislig City source their livelihood.

May we inform all concerned government agencies that this belief of PRI's sizable investment and significant number of workers employed is no longer true at present. PRI maintains a large number of obsolete machineries, dilapidated buildings and logged-over areas that are about 80% void of natural grown or planted tees. To date, PRI employs barely 2,000 regular and casual workers only.

Lately, PRI accused two priests, REV. FR. FLORIO R. FALCON and REV. FR. ERWIN ROMMEL C. TORRES, of five counts (Criminal Cases Nos. 07-1456 to 07-1460) and two counts (Criminal Cases Nos. 07-1461 to 07-1462) of libel, respectively, before Branch 138 of the Regional Trial Court of Makati City, for unraveling the truth of the foregoing concerns.

Your Excellency, we are confronted with the foregoing tragic realities because of the dereliction of duties by, and ineptitude of , the LGU, the DENR and the other concerned government agencies, who turned callous and indifferent to the tragic plight of Bislig City and its inhabitants, in particular, and to the neighboring communities and provinces, in general.

Therefore, Her Excellency's Direct Executive remedial and/or investigative intervention on the PRI's abuses and sabotage of our economy is urgently sought. Otherwise, to whom shall we turn to?

REV. FR. FLORIO R. FALCON,DCT
SVDP Parish Priest &
Pres. Kalihukan Bantay Kabuhatan, Inc.
(KABAKAI)

REV. FR. ERWIN ROMMEL C. TORRES
President of SVP College & Parochial Vicar
SVPP Mangagoy, Bislig City,
Surigao del Sur

REV. FR. GLENN C. INFIESTO
Vice Pres. SVDPC & Vicar
SVDPP, Mangagoy, Bislig City
Surigao del Sur

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CARMELITO O. MILLAN
Social Action Chairman
Mangagoy, Bislig City, SDS

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IN TOTAL SUPPORT TO THE ABOVE STATEMENT, THE PRESBYTERIUM OF THE DIOCESE OF TANDAG SURIGAO DEL SUR, AS REPRESENTED BY THE BISHOP, HEREBY AFFIXED HIS SIGNATURE:

+NEREO P. ODCHIMAR, DD, JCD
Vice-President, Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP)
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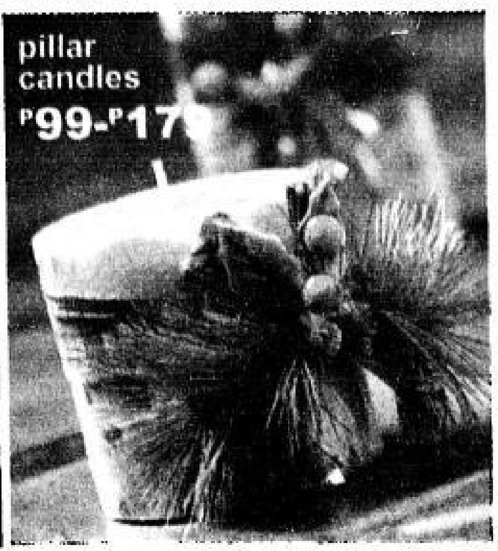

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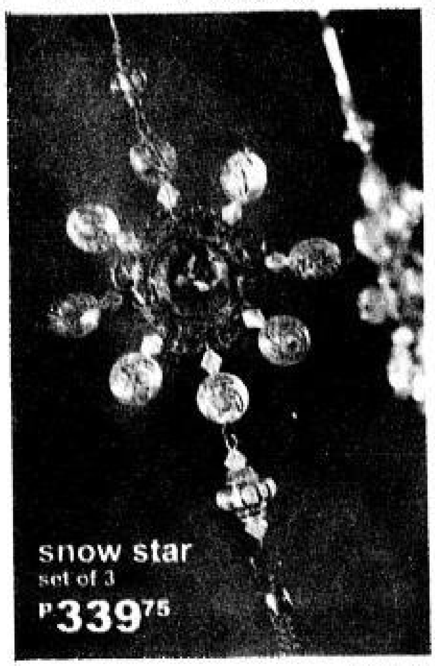

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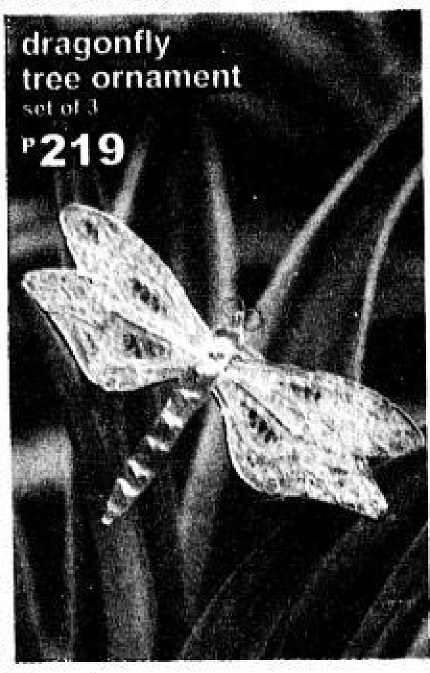

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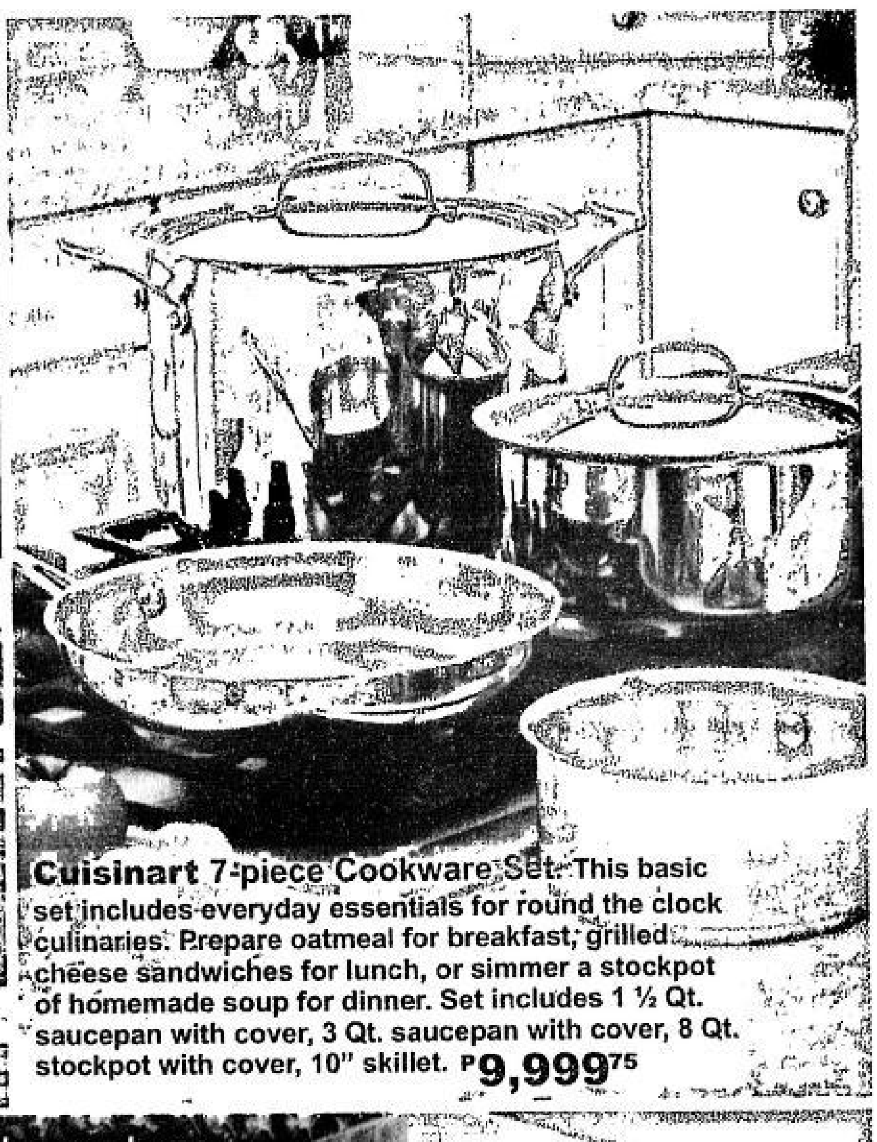
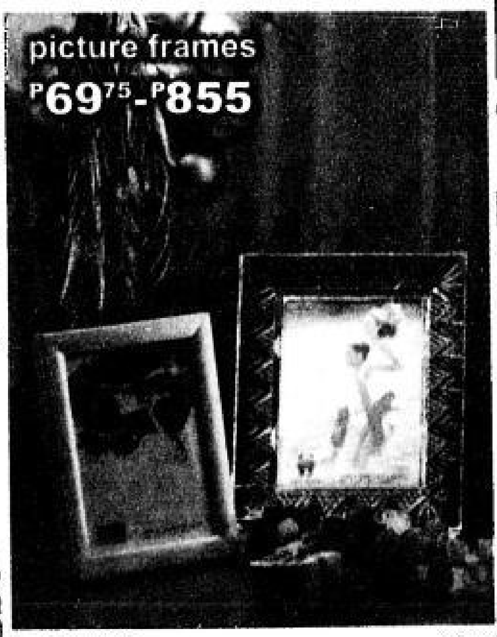


Cuisinart 7-piece Cookware Set. This basic set includes everyday essentials for round the clock culinaries. Prepare oatmeal for breakfast, grilled cheese sandwiches for lunch, or simmer a stockpot of homemade soup for dinner. Set includes 1 ½ Qt. saucepan with cover, 3 Qt. saucepan with cover, 8 Qt. stockpot with cover, 10" skillet. P9,999^{75}

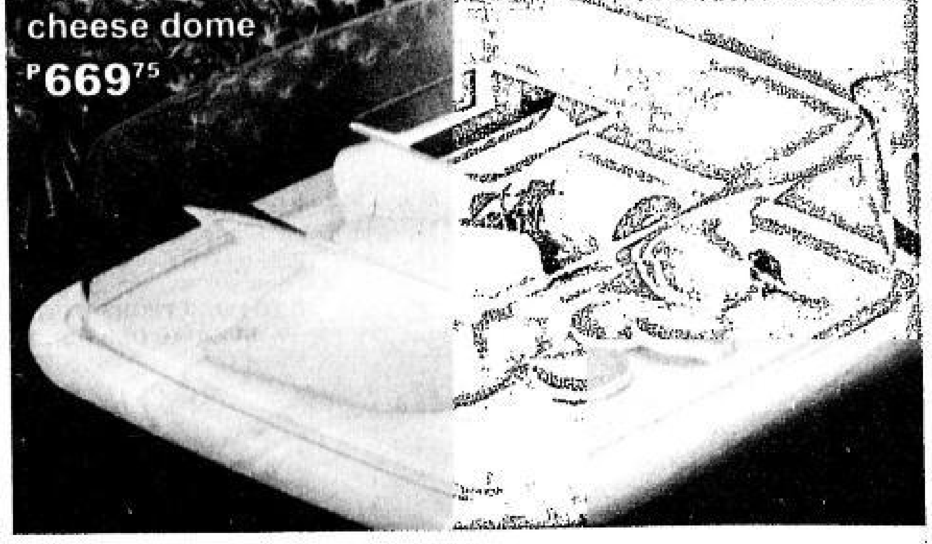


picture frames
P69^{75}-P855

Home Gallery
astro vacuum food keepers
P89^{75}-P199^{75}

12 pc. Dinnerware Set
P349

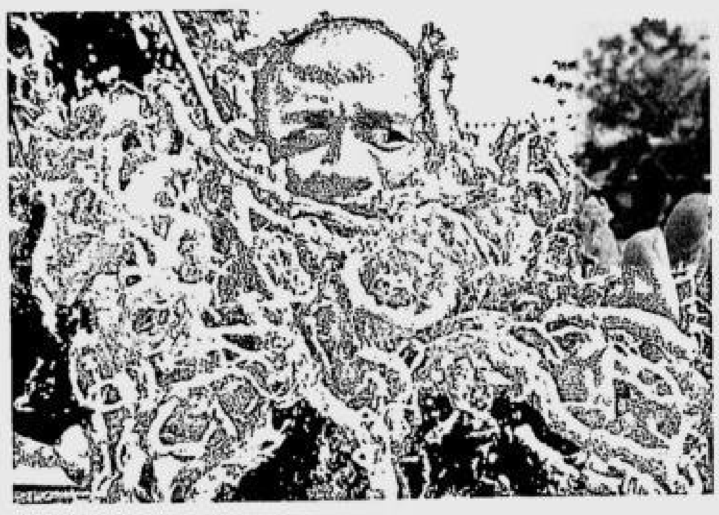
baker collection
P279^{75}-P299^{75}



cheese dome
P669^{75}

DEPARTMENT STORE & SUPERMARKET

‘Climate change’ experiment questioned



FAVORITE DELICACY ERIK ARAZAS
Joselito Ramirez shows the seaweeds he sells in MacArthur, Eastern Samar. The harvest is one of the favorite delicacies of visitors.

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—THE BUREAU OF FISHERIES and Aquatic Resources has withheld endorsement of a proposed experiment by an Australian firm to release 500 tons of urea near Panay Island.

Urea, a chemical fertilizer, is expected to stimulate the growth of phytoplankton that is hoped to reduce carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

Fisheries regional director Drusila Esther Bayate said she was concerned with the experiment's impact on marine life because of the big volume of urea to be dumped.

"Once it (urea) is there, it would be beyond our control," Bayate told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview.

She said she has asked a team from the Sydney-based Ocean Nourishment Corp. (ONC) to submit a complete project proposal before she would consider endorsing the experiment to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

ONC's "ocean nourishment" project involves the release of 500 tons of urea granules into the Sulu and Celebes seas.

But environmental groups, including Greenpeace-Southeast Asia and the Southeast Asia Regional Initiatives for Community Empowerment, have called for a stop to the plan until its viability and safety is guaranteed.

In a petition paper, the groups questioned the scientific basis of the experiment, citing possible negative impacts on the environment, as well as marine and human life.

They urged the BFAR and the DENR to withhold approval of the project until all scientific issues and the legality of the project were resolved.

But a University of Philippines in the Visayas (UPV)-based professor has defended the proposed study.

While caution should be undertaken in an experiment, the "ocean nourishment" project would be "calculated" and guided by protocols, according to Dr. Romeo Fortes, former dean of the UPV College of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences.

Fortes said the project would be very beneficial if it succeeded.

However, the UPV, in a statement issued earlier, said the project could "pose a threat to the marine environment."

Fortes denied reports that a ton of urea was released last month into the waters off Anini-y town in Antique.

"As far as I am aware, no experiment has been conducted yet. It is still just a proposal," he said in a telephone interview.

Fortes admitted that he accompanied a team from ONC in conducting an inspection last month of the Panay Gulf, between Guimaras and Iloilo going to the southern part of Panay.

The team included two Americans, two Australians and a Korean, he said.

Dagupan radioman survives shooting

DAGUPAN CITY—A RADIO ANNOUNCER was shot and wounded by two motorcycle-riding men near his house along the De Venecia Highway here on Friday night, police said.

Allan Sison, 41, was hit twice in the chest and right armpit, according to city police chief Supt. Dionisio Borromeo.

Sison was taken to the Dagupan City Trauma Center, where he underwent surgery. Doctors on Saturday said Sison was out of danger.

Borromeo said Sison was talking to Lily Duque, owner of a commercial stall near his house, when the two gunmen arrived at 11:30 p.m.

He said the back rider got off, pushed Duque aside before approaching Sison and shooting him with a .45 cal. pistol. The attackers fled toward nearby Calasiao town, about 5 kilometers from here.

Sison, locally known as "Doctor Heart," has a program aired nightly over Love Radio, a station of Manila Broadcasting Corp. His program advises callers on relationships and accepts song requests and dedications.

Sison, in a statement to police on Saturday, said he could identify his attackers once he sees them again. He said the attack could not be work-related because his program did not deal with political commentaries.

Police said this was the second time this year that Sison was attacked.

In April, Sison told police that he was shot while driving to the radio station. He was not hurt in that attack but a side mirror of his car was shattered.

Last month, Sison ran for barangay chair in Domalandan West in Lingayen town but lost. *Gabriel Cardinoza, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

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More Sports on A29-A32

Late SPORTS

Tugade's 34 powers Magnolia; TNT wins

AUGUST DELA CRUZ

MAGNOLIA'S Dondon Hontiveros foils Ginebra's Mark Caguioa.

By Musong R. Castillo

POWERHOUSES MAGNOLIA AND TALK 'N TEXT HAMMERED separate foes at the Araneta Coliseum last night to stay tied for second place in the elimination round of the Smart-PBA Philippine Cup.

The Beverage Masters drew a career-high 34 points from swingman Lordy Tugade in a 101-90 victory over Barangay Ginebra, while the Phone Pals caught up with Magnolia after an easy 113-88 win over luckless Coca-Cola Tigers.

Ginebra took its sixth loss in eight games despite getting 22 points and 11 rebounds from returning forward Eric Menk and 17 points from starting guard Jay-Jay Helterbrand.

"What can I say? Even I, as a coach, enjoyed watching Lordy tonight," said Magnolia coach Siot Tanquingcen, who also got 16 points from Dondon Hontiveros and 14 from Enrico Villanueva.

Magnolia bucked 23 errors in leaving Mark Caguioa winless for the second straight game since coming back from a six-game layoff because of a shoulder injury.

Tugade, who contributed just two points in a shock loss to Welcoat last Friday, hit 5-of-9 triple attempts that powered the Beverage Masters to a 55.6 percent clip from beyond the arc.

Anthony Washington stood at the forefront of the swashbuckling Talk 'N Text game, shooting 19 points built around an 8-of-12 clip from the field. The 6-foot-7 Fil-American also collared eight rebounds.

Talk 'N Text enjoyed leads of as many as 30 points and was never threatened by a Coca-Cola side that still played without Alex Cabagnot and tumbled for the sixth straight time after opening up with a win.

Meanwhile, former San Miguel board representative Bert Manlapit has been nominated as the fifth candidate for the vacant post of league commissioner.

GAMES WEDNESDAY
(Araneta Coliseum)
4:50 p.m.—Purefoods vs Alaska
7:20 p.m.—Welcoat vs Sta. Lucia

The scores:

First Game

MAGNOLIA 101—Tugade 34, Hontiveros 16, Villanueva 14, Racela 9, eagle 9, Tenorio 7, Eman 3, Gonzales 3, Calaguio 3, Ildefonso 3.

BARANGAY GINEBRA 90—Menk 22, Helterbrand 17, Tubid 15, Mamaril 10, Caguioa 10, Reavies 7, Escalona 5, Aquino 3, Holper 1, Macapagal 0, Salvacion 0.

Quarters: 27-21; 44-37; 73-64; 101-90

Second Game

TALK 'N TEXT 113—Washington 19, Ritualo 19, Aljamal 15, Belano 15, Cardona 12, Allado 10, Alapag 9, Taulava 4, Fran 4, De Ocampo 4, Ferreria 2, Barcellano 0.

COCA-COLA 88—Peek 20, Telan 14, Calimag 13, Catli 9, Arigo 8, Enrile 6, Duremdes 6, Tolomia 4, Caceres 3, Rizada 2, Echavez 2, Buenafe 1.

Quarters: 24-25, 55-45, 90-62, 113-88

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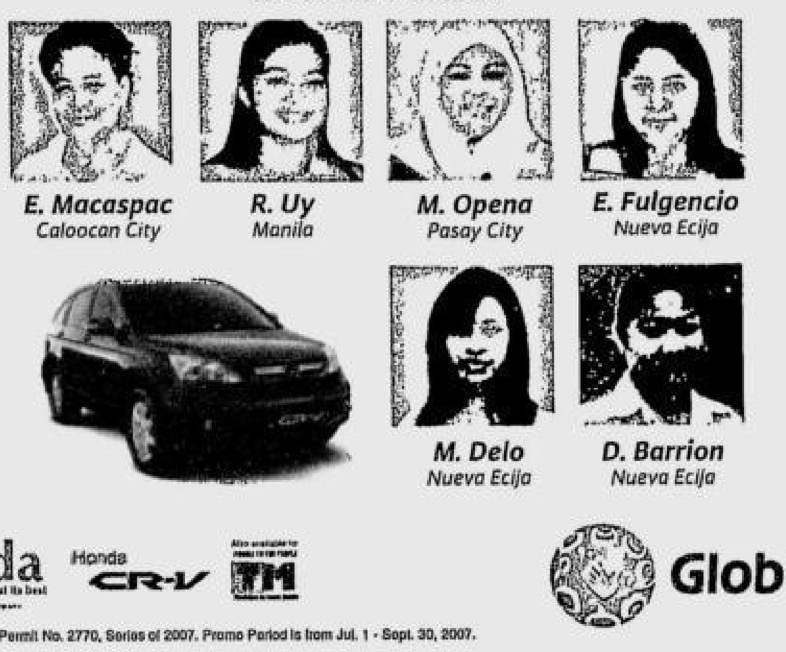
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CA orders mayor to pay ₱1.6M to cement firm

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE COURT OF APPEALS HAS ORDERED MARIKINA MAYOR MA. Lourdes Fernando, who used to sit as chair of the board of BF Corporation, to settle her firm's debt with a cement company which arose from a transaction made 12 years ago.

The appellate court's Oct. 31 decision upheld the ruling of a lower court which had ordered the construction firm, then represented by Fernando, to pay more than P1.6 million to Pacific Cement Co. Inc., in addition to a legal interest of 30 percent per annum, P100,000 in damages, P20,000 in expenses plus attorney's fees.

According to the records of the case, BF Corporation, which used to be run by Fernando and her husband, Metropolitan Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando, entered into a deal with Pacific in 1995 for the delivery of cement for several of its projects.

Pacific delivered P3.8 million worth of cement but only received P2.1 million from the construction firm. The latter then failed to pay the remaining amount despite repeated demands, prompting Pacific to file a case in court.

In its defense, BF Corporation said it did not receive all of the cement. It also contested the documents presented as evidence by Pacific, saying these were only photocopies.

The appellate court, however, said that Pacific was able to produce enough evidence to show that it had delivered the cement and was entitled to payment.

"No doubt, appellee [Pacific Cement] proved his case through preponderance of evidence in support of its valid claims against appellant [BF Corporation]. On the other hand, appellant resorted to bare denial of any liability to appellee. Evidentiary facts, not conjectures or speculations, should determine the merits of the case," the court noted.

It also found no merit in BF Corporation's claim that it did not receive the cement and that the documents presented by Pacific were inadmissible because they were not the original copies.

Among the documents presented were the sales invoice as well as the delivery receipts.

According to the court, Pacific's failure to produce the original documents was understandable. It cited the testimony of one of the company's sales representatives who said that the original sales invoice had been submitted to the Philippine National Bank, while the original delivery receipts were with Fernando's firm.

Contacted for comment, Mayor Fernando said she has yet to see a copy of the court ruling although she added that the company might have to comply with the court order.

With Kristine L. Alave

Runner collapses, dies just before finish line

By Allison W. Lopez

A 38-YEAR-OLD PARTICIPANT IN a marathon in Manila collapsed and died yesterday morning.

PO2 Jay Santos of the Manila Police District homicide division identified the victim as Fidel Camson, chief electrical engineer of the Isetann Department Store in Quiapo.

Camson, one of the participants in the 10-kilometer category of the 31st National Milo Marathon, collapsed as he was running on the northbound lane of Roxas Boulevard, in front of the Rajah Sulayman Park at 7:10 a.m. He was on his way to the finish line at the Quirino Grandstand.

He was declared dead on arrival at the Ospital ng Maynila.

Although the cause of death has yet to be determined, the police said they suspected that Camson suffered a heart attack.

His wife told investigators that he had hypertension and heart palpitations although this did not stop him from regularly joining previous marathons.

NOTICE OF DISSOLUTION

Notice is hereby given that the dissolution of HINGE MEDIA, INC. ("Corporation") by amending its articles of incorporation to shorten the corporate term from fifty (50) years from and after the date of incorporation to until 31 December 2005 was approved by the affirmative vote of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the outstanding capital stock and majority of the Board of Directors of the Corporation in its joint special meeting held on 29 December 2005.

All persons having a claim against the Corporation are requested to present their claim at the place of business of the Corporation's former officers/ employees at Unit 330 Mile Long Bldg., Amorsolo St., Legaspi Village, Makati City for immediate settlement.

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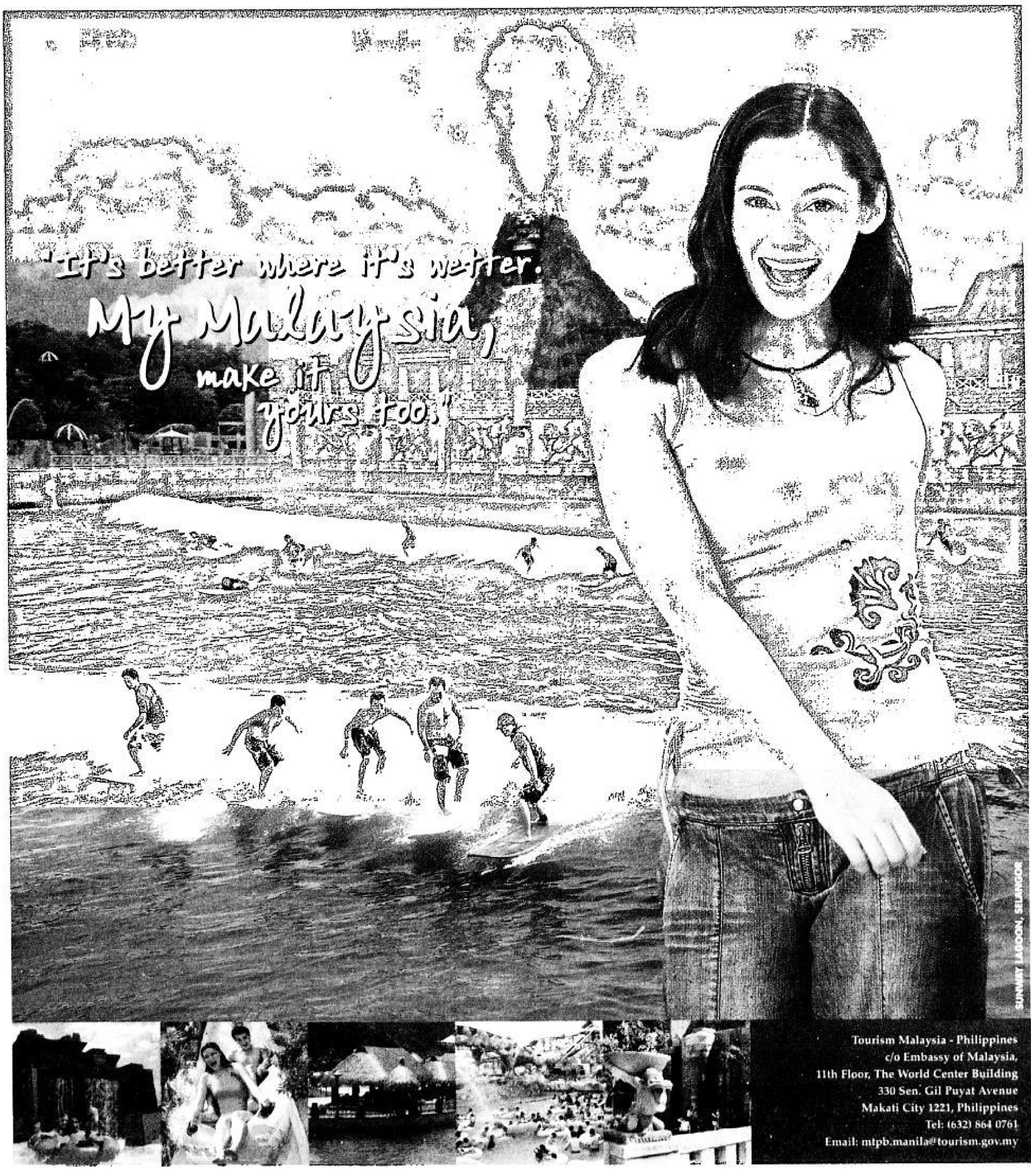

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Suspected drug dealer's body found inside parked luxury car

By Jeannette I. Andrade

THE BODY OF A SUSPECTED DRUG PUSHER was found inside a luxury car before dawn yesterday.

Police said Melvin Ochoa, 36, of V. Concepcion Street, B.F. Homes in Parañaque City, had been stabbed to death. His throat had also been slashed.

The body was found by a messenger, Bobby Relado, who called the police for help.

Operatives of the Quezon City Police District Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit who went to the scene at 5:50 a.m. said that the victim's body was already stiff.

He was seated behind the wheel of a silver Mercedes Benz with license plate WTT 490.

The vehicle was parked in front of the United Overseas Bank at 49 Tomas Morato Avenue in Barangay Obrero.

Security guards of establishments in the area told QCPD-CIDU investigators that the car had been there since Saturday night, between 9 p.m. and 10 p.m.

No defensive wounds

According to the police, the victim did not have defensive wounds on his arms, an indication that he was not able to fight off his attacker who could have been seated in the car's back seat.

Police investigators recovered from the victim a small transparent sachet containing brownish crystalline particles which they believe could either be shabu (methamphetamine hydrochloride) or cocaine.

The sachet was kept inside a black eyeglass case.

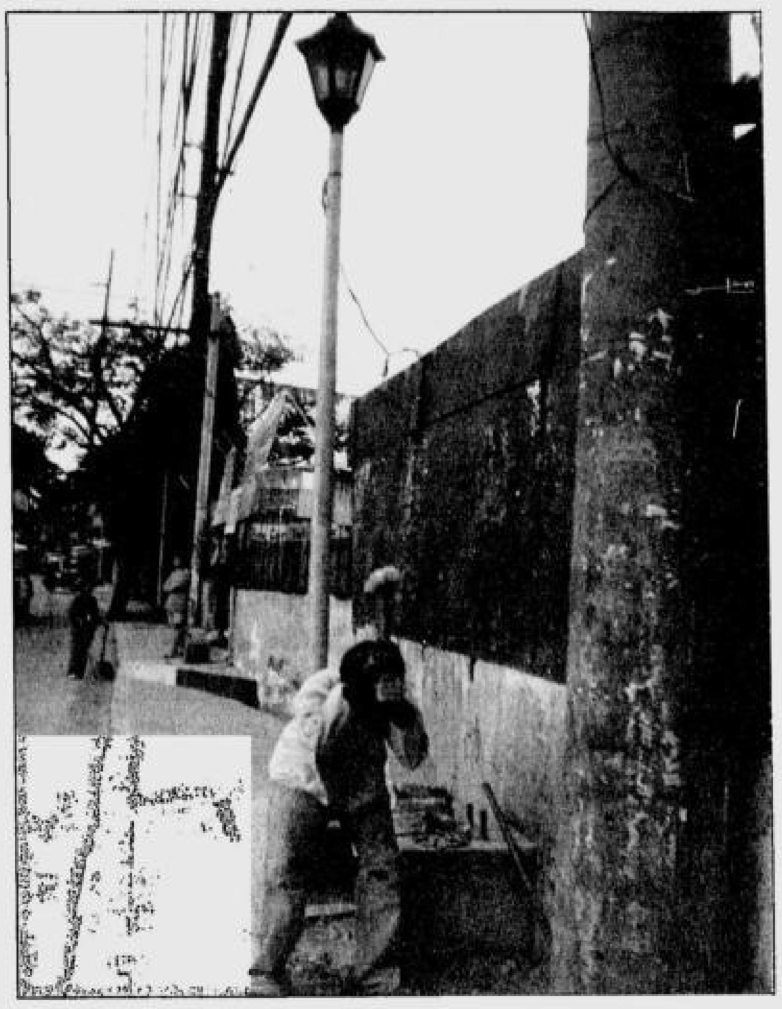
Previous arrest

Based on records of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency Metro Manila Regional Office, the victim was one of two suspects arrested by the agency's agents during an antidrug operation on March 7, 2003.

The suspects were caught selling two grams of cocaine for P7,000 in a black Ford Expedition on Sucat Road in Parañaque City.

During the same operation, PDEA agents also seized another nine grams of cocaine they found inside the suspects' vehicle. The drug was hidden in a black eyeglass case.

QCPD-CIDU investigators theorized that the killing might be related to the victim's drug activities.



WASTE OF TAXPAYERS' MONEY
From Jovy Tabios, 25, of Muntinlupa City: "Why replace the scores of street lights on the national road and side streets in Muntinlupa when these are still working? Workers have been digging holes on the sidewalk, fashioning concrete stumps and chiseling the sidewalks for the electric wire of the new lamps. It's a waste of taxpayers' money! The new mayor calls the decommissioning of the three-year-old lamps put up by his predecessor as 'upgrading.' The money would have been better spent for pedestrian overpasses between the city terminal and the Alabang plaza, and between the wet market and the plaza to help ease traffic flow and prevent commuters from being hit by vehicles. A less expensive project would be building a covered walk with lights for people going to the Ospital ng Muntinlupa from the main road across the Metropolis." CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

METROBRIEFS

Gender-friendly schools cited

THE CITY of Makati will recognize today the winners of the citywide search for the most "gender-responsive" high school and barangay at the City Hall Quadrangle. The Gen. Pio del Pilar National High School was adjudged the most gender-friendly public high school in the maiden search, while Pitogo High School and Fort Bonifacio High School took runner-up honors. In the barangay category, Kasilawan was the grand winner for the second straight year, with Singkamas and Sta. Cruz placing second and third, respectively, city officials said. The grand winners will be awarded a P20,000 cash prize, a marker and trophy, while second- and third-placers will receive P15,000 and P10,000, respectively, as well as trophies and certificates.

DJ Yap

DID YOU KNOW

IN 1863, MALACAÑANG became the official residence of the Spanish governor-general after an earthquake wrecked the royal palace in Intramuros. The arrangement was meant to be temporary but the lack of resources and more earthquakes prevented the reconstruction of the Intramuros palace.

When the Americans colonized the Philippines at the end of the 19th century, they continued using Malacañang as the official residence of the head of the islands. In 1935, Manuel L. Quezon became the first Filipino president to live in the Palace.

Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research

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Dog pound needed

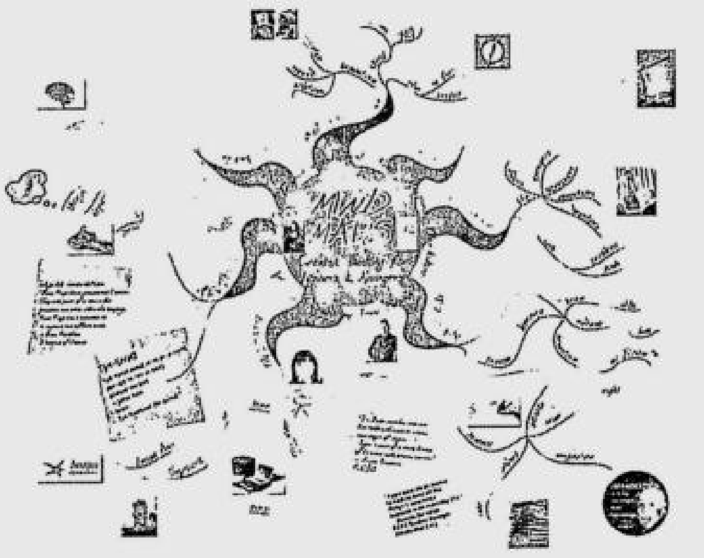
I AM CALLING on Mayor Mon Ilagan to provide residents of Village East a compound for stray dogs that manage to enter the place. I already made a similar appeal to the village administrator but he said there is no money to set up one. We would like to know if it is possible to allocate a certain amount for this purpose or for local officials to pass an ordinance to make our streets safer from stray dogs and the mess they leave behind. Thank you.

JUANCHO JOSE, 39, Cainta

Road unsafe

ORTIGAS Avenue at the corner of Edsa across the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration building is not safe for pedestrians. The sidewalk is full of vendors and the lane closest to it is used by jeepney drivers waiting for passengers. Pedestrians are forced to use the inner lanes where they run the risk of being hit by vehicles. Can't these drivers pick up their passengers inside the parking lot just a few steps away and the sidewalk cleared of obstructions?

EDITH AVENDANO, 58, Las Piñas City



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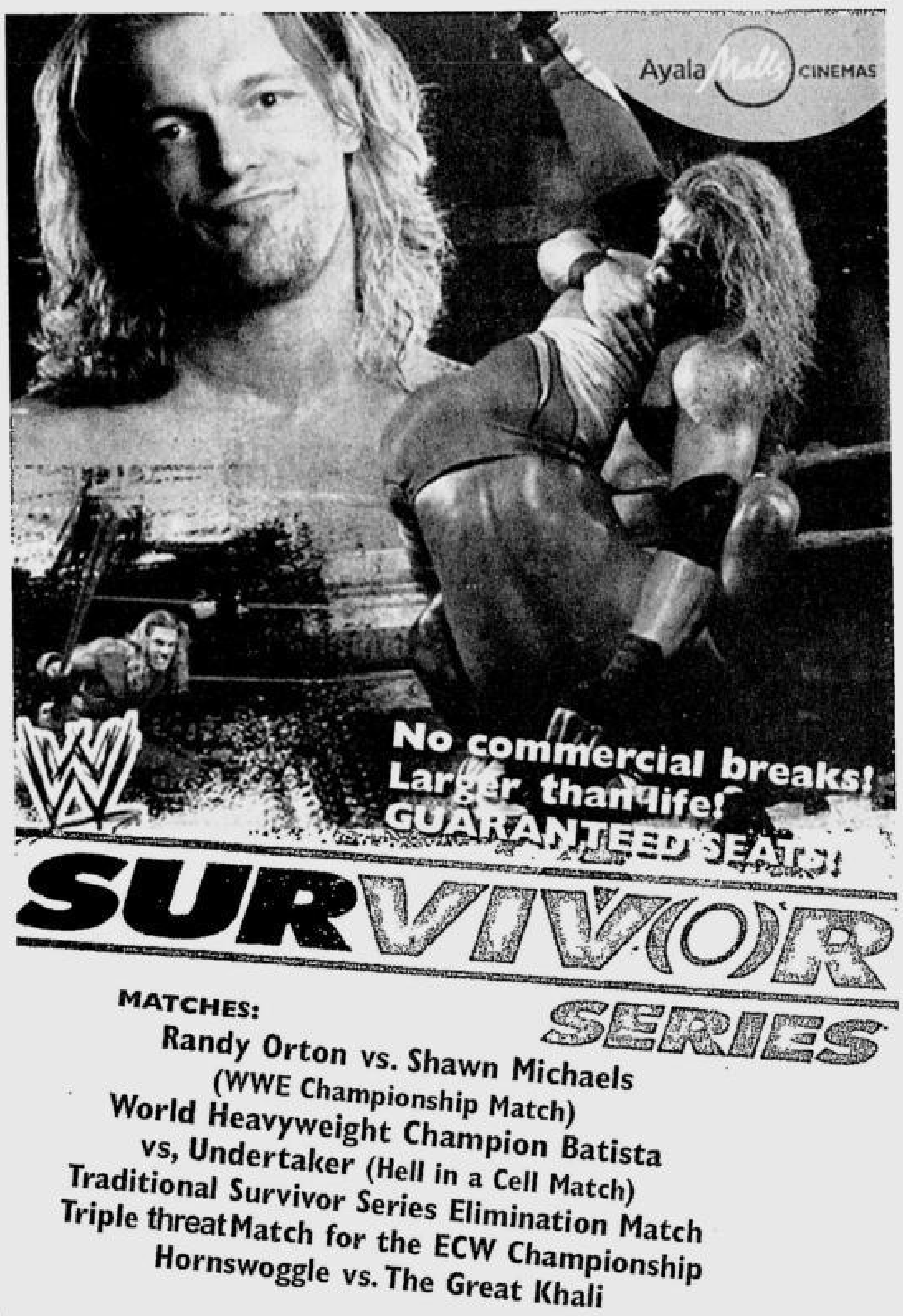
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$300-M fund vs climate change

RIYADH—SAUDI ARABIA, THE world's biggest oil exporter, announced on Saturday a multi-million-dollar fund to tackle global warming that is set to focus on finding technological solutions to the climate change problem.

Making the announcement at the opening of the third Opec summit in Riyadh, King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz said the kingdom will invest $300 million to develop technology to tackle climate change.

"I announce that the kingdom of Saudi Arabia is giving an amount of $300 million that will be basis of a program that will finance research related to the future of energy, environment and climate change," he said.

The king described attempts to exaggerate the impact of oil on the environment and climate change as "erroneous." Opec ministers on Friday expressed support for carbon capture and storage, an emerging technology to trap carbon dioxide and store it underground.

"Protecting the planet" is one of three headline themes of the Opec summit, a surprising focus for a group of oil producers whose wealth depends on their exports of fossil fuels.

Algeria's Energy Minister Chakib Khelil said on Friday the final statement to be issued by Opec leaders on Sunday will call for expanding the use of carbon capture and storage technology to curb carbon emissions. *AFP*

Oil firms lobby vs global warming

LOS ANGELES—ON A DAY when a UN panel warned of growing peril from climate change, Democratic presidential candidate John Edwards accused the oil and gas industry of deploying hundreds of lobbyists to Washington to resist efforts to free the United States from its dependence on fossil fuels.

Edwards' criticism came during a forum on global warming, where he and fellow Democrats Hillary Rodham Clinton and Dennis Kucinich outlined similar goals of curbing greenhouse gases, expanding alternative energy sources and creating jobs in a green economy.

The three appeared separately on stage, the only candidates from either party to accept invitations from sponsors Grist, an online environmental magazine, and Public Radio International's "Living on Earth," a nationally broadcast program on environmental concerns. The forum was held in partnership with the League of Conservation Voters Education Fund and other environmental groups.

Like his rivals, Edwards said climate change requires urgent action. But he argued repeatedly that measures to slow global warming are being hindered by a broken political system in Washington that bends to corporate power and feeds off its money.

"I see the oil and gas companies blocking progress by spending millions of dollars and deploying hundreds of lobbyists in Washington to make sure that America stays addicted to foreign oil and fossil fuels," Edwards said.

Edwards' comments on lobbyists appeared aimed at least partly at Clinton. He has accused her of being beholden to corporate interests that have contributed lavishly to her campaign. Clinton has accepted $567,950 from lobbyists, while Edwards has accepted $18,900, according to an analysis by the nonpartisan Center for Responsive Politics.

In her remarks, Clinton credited other Democrats for making proposals to address climate warming but sought to distinguish herself as the candidate best able to bring about those changes.

Progress, she stressed, "takes more than a plan." A president needs "strength and experience to make it a reality," she said, echoing a campaign refrain.

President George W. Bush was a frequent target of the candidates. And each talked with concern about workers, such as coal miners, who could suffer in a transition to a green-tinged economy.

But there were differences.

As part of her approach, Clinton supports a cap-and-trade plan, under which power plants or businesses that exceed pollution caps must buy or trade for additional allowances, usually from others that have been able to cut their emissions.

Kucinich called that a "phony solution."

Edwards and Kucinich talked forcefully of breaking the hold of oil and gas interests in Washington, but Clinton spoke broadly of making varied interests part of the solutions.

To build a case against global warming, "it is especially important that we figure out ways to enlist the millions and millions of Americans who make billions of decisions every year about how they use energy," she said.

Baghdad's busy ambulance drivers catch their breath

A WOMAN walks past ambulances parked at the Health Ministry in Baghdad on Nov. 14. REUTERS

BAGHDAD—WITH VIOLENCE levels dropping across the city, Baghdad's hard-working ambulance drivers now find time to sit and sip tea instead of each rushing to four or five emergency calls a day.

"Today the situation has changed for the best. There are ambulances that sometimes do not go out on duty for two days," said Kais Mohammed, head of an emergency services center that covers all of southern Baghdad and some areas west.

Baghdadis had become used to the wail of sirens and the sight of red-and-white ambulances speeding through the city's chaotic streets in response to a relentless daily toll of bombings and shootings.

Sectarian violence has claimed tens of thousands of lives in Iraq since the February 2006 bombing of a revered Shiite mosque in predominantly Sunni Arab Samarra, north of Baghdad, unleashed waves of reprisal killings.

Iraqi and US officials have reported sharp falls in Iraqi and US military casualties in the past two months after a "surge" of 30,000 extra US troops was completed in mid-June.

Improving Iraqi security forces and the spread of neighborhood police units, mainly organized by Sunni Arab tribal sheikhs to drive out al-Qaida fighters, have also made significant contributions to a more stable Iraq, officials say.

It has lightened the burden for Baghdad's ambulance drivers, who found no shortage of work during the capital's darkest days.

Southern Baghdad's main emergency ambulance center controls 16 stations across the south and west of the sprawling city, each of which has three ambulances. Each ambulance has rotating teams of three drivers and three first aid workers.

"One driver could go out on four or five calls in one day," said Mohammed, sitting in front of a picture of a dead colleague, as he recalled the height of the violence.

Ambulance driver Abbas Fadhil remembers one day when he was called out to four separate explosions in his duty area.

"I remember one of those explosions—I carried 12 of the victims, dead and wounded," he said.

First aid worker Alla Nasir has horrible memories, including one explosion at a fuel station in west Baghdad's once-affluent Mansour district.

"I transferred 17 bodies in the ambulance, which normally takes just two or three. One of the bodies was burning and stuck to the rubber mat.

When we pulled the body out, the mat came out of the ambulance," he said.

Mohammed said ambulance drivers had been at great risk of physical injury and psychological trauma because of their work.

Ambulances were targeted by gunfire and roadside bombs, and five of his drivers had been killed. *Reuters*

Oil prices could hit $200/barrel

RIYADH—OPEC LEADERS BEgan a summit on Saturday with Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez issuing a chilling warning about oil prices in a speech that also urged the group to be actively involved in foreign policy.

The fiery leftist leader warned in an opening speech that crude prices could double from their current already-record level of near $100 a barrel if the United States attacked Iran or Venezuela.

"If the United States was mad enough to attack Iran or aggress Venezuela again the price of a barrel of oil could reach $150 or even $200," he said.

He urged assembled leaders from the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, meeting for only the third time in the cartel's 47-year history, to club together for geopolitical reasons.

"The basis of all aggression is oil. It is the underlying reason," Chavez said, pointing to the war in Iraq and US threats against Iran.

"Today Opec stands strong. It is stronger than it has ever been in the past," he said. "Opec should set itself up as an active geopolitical agent." His remarks were tempered by King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, the Opec kingpin and key US regional ally, who said that "oil is an energy for construction and must not become an instrument for conflict."

Opec's 12-strong membership is dominated by pro-Western Gulf states but includes an anti-US bloc of Iran and Venezuela.

The event comes at a time of tension on world oil markets, with the cartel under pressure to increase its output to help calm record crude prices that had threatened to breach $100 a barrel 10 days ago.

The talks are intended to map out the strategic direction of Opec, which produces about 40 percent of world oil, but the group is divided on a number of issues.

In a gaffe late on Friday, a private meeting of Opec oil, foreign and finance ministers was mistakenly broadcast to journalists, revealing a spat between Saudi Arabia and Iran about the waning US currency. *AFP*

WORLDBRIEFS

70 killed in Pakistan fighting

PESHAWAR—Fighting between rival Sunni and Shiite Muslims in northwestern Pakistan's troubled tribal belt has claimed 70 lives, security officials and state media reported on Sunday. State television said another 150 people were injured as heavily armed tribesmen clashed in the Kurram district bordering Afghanistan. Security officials said at least 61 civilians had died in fighting in the district's main town Parachinar, where sectarian clashes in April left 55 dead. The military said nine soldiers from the Army and paramilitary forces had also died, with 15 wounded, after being caught in the cross-fire. *AFP*

Ukraine blast kills 19

KIEV—A methane blast ripped through a coal mine in eastern Ukraine early Sunday, killing at least 19 miners, emergency officials said. More than 150 miners were still trapped underground and their fate was unknown. The explosion occurred at the Zasyadka mine in the Donetsk region at a depth of more than 1,000 meters at around 3 a.m., the Emergency Situations Ministry said on its website. The ministry also said that 297 miners have already been lifted to the surface while 160 others were still trapped underground. *AP*

Rail strike in France on 5th day

PARIS—France's biggest rail union said on Saturday a new offer of talks from employers did not go far enough, as the country headed towards a fifth day of crippling transport strikes. The General Labour Confederation (CGT) said negotiating proposals from the state-owned rail firm SNCF on Friday "did not respond to all the issues" and the union would only negotiate on the "whole package" of proposed reforms. The deadlock on the country's intercity, regional and metro public transport systems came ahead of planned—but separate—strikes by civil servants and lawyers and magistrates on Tuesday. *AFP*

23 militants dead in Afghanistan

KABUL—US-led forces have killed 23 militants during weapons searches in southern Afghanistan while two Canadian coalition soldiers and their interpreter died in a bomb blast, the foreign forces said on Saturday. Coalition forces searched compounds in the Garmser district of Helmand province looking for weapons. "Several armed militants threatening coalition forces were engaged and killed during the course of this operation," a US military statement said. Another 11 suspects were detained, it said. *Reuters*

30 bodies found in Baghdad

BAGHDAD—The bodies of at least 30 people, including women and children, have been found in a mainly Sunni Arab area of Baghdad, police and government officials said on Saturday. An "Awakening Council" of local leaders, which oversees neighborhood policing, discovered at least 30 decomposing bodies in the Hay Asia area of Doura in southern Baghdad, an Interior Ministry official said. The bodies were moved to a mosque and then taken to a police station, the official said. He said they were found in several locations in and around houses. *Reuters*

Ex-guerrilla claims Kosovo poll win

PRISTINA, SERBIA—Former Kosovo guerrilla leader Hashim Thaci, whose party favors speedy independence, claimed victory on Sunday after crucial parliamentary elections in the disputed Serbian province. "I thank all of those who helped our victory and the victory of Kosovo," Thaci told a celebration of his Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK), which an unofficial tally showed had won 35 percent of Saturday's vote. "The citizens of Kosovo sent the world a message that we are a democratic country ready to join the European family. The strongest message was that Kosovo is ready (for) independence," he told thousands of cheering supporters. *AFP*

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

US urges Musharraf to end emergency

NEGROPONTE AFP

ISLAMABAD—THE UNITED States called on Sunday on President Pervez Musharraf to end the state of emergency in Pakistan ahead of upcoming elections, free political prisoners and resume talks with the opposition.

In a blunt message to the military ruler, top diplomat John Negroponte said Pakistan's people deserved better than emergency rule, which was "not compatible" with a free and fair vote.

The US deputy secretary of state flew to Islamabad amid growing US concern at the situation in Pakistan, a crucial US ally in the "war on terror" whose raging political crisis has rattled nerves in Washington.

He met Musharraf and other key officials and also spoke by telephone with opposition leader and former Premier Benazir Bhutto.

Negroponte said it was too early to talk of the success or failure of his diplomacy, admitting the situation had "polarized somewhat" with Bhutto twice put under house arrest.

He urged Musharraf to cancel the emergency, release thousands of political opponents, lawyers and rights activists who have been rounded up and jailed, and lift curbs that have shut down private television news channels.

"We do not think that these kind of emergency measures are compatible with the kind of environment that is needed to conduct free and fair elections," he said.

Negroponte said Musharraf repeated his vow to resign as Army chief before taking office for a second time as president.

But there was no sign of any date for halting the two-week-old emergency, which Musharraf says should stay until general elections by Jan. 9.

"The people of Pakistan deserve an opportunity to choose their leaders free from the restrictions that exist under a state of emergency," the US official said.

Negroponte urged Musharraf and Bhutto to restart power-sharing talks they had been holding until recently, and which Washington had eyed as a moderate bulwark against extremism.

Bhutto appeared to scrap hope of an agreement last week, ruling out further talks and vowing never to serve with Musharraf in government.

Negroponte appealed for compromise. "If steps were taken by both sides to move back towards the kind of reconciliation discussions they had been having previously, we think that could be very positive," he said.

The talks would help "pull the political actors back from the atmosphere of brinksmanship and confrontation." *AFP*

Bangladesh cyclone death toll hits 2,000

BARGUNA—BANGLADESH SAID SUNDAY THE death toll from a massive cyclone hit 2,000, with that grim tally certain to rise as the impoverished country struggled to get aid to millions left homeless.

The death toll has been jumping by hundreds at a time as rescue workers fight their way to remote areas where entire villages were flattened by the fury of Cyclone Sidr, which tore through southern Bangladesh on Thursday night.

Victims of the cyclone told AFP they were helpless and in desperate need of food and water.

"I lost six of my family members in the cyclone. I am afraid that the rest of us three will die of hunger. We have no food and water for the last few days," said 55-year-old farmer Sattar Gazi in the village of Nishanbari.

"For the corpses we don't even have clothes to wrap them in for burial ... We are wrapping the bodies in leaves." Abdul Zabbar, a 50-year-old teacher, said the situation in the area—already one of the poorest places on earth—was now unbearable.

"There is no food and drinking water. The whole village is unlivable. Bodies are still floating in the rivers and paddy fields," he said.

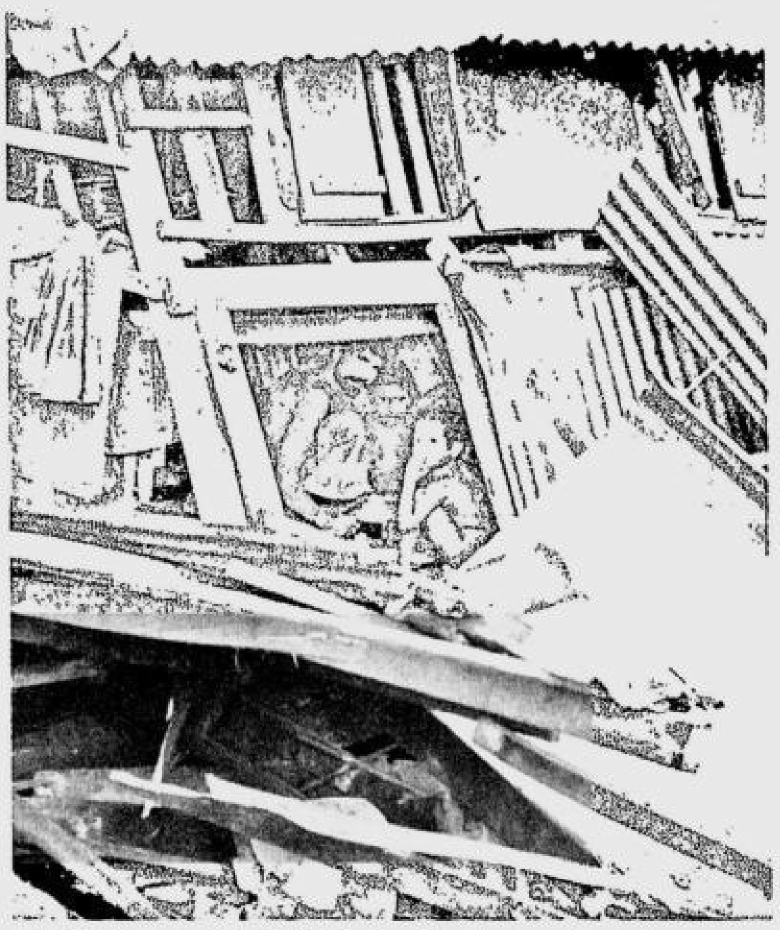
"And still, no relief officials and rescue officials have come to our area." Officials described the humanitarian situation in coastal districts like Barguna, 200 km south of the capital Dhaka, as the worst in decades.

"I have never seen such a catastrophe in my 20 years as a government administrator," said district official Harisprasad Pal.

"Village after village has been shattered," he said. "Millions of people are living out in the open and relief is reaching less than one percent of the people." Aid efforts were being hampered by blocked roads and the sheer scale of the devastation. In some places elephants were used to remove fallen trees blocking access to remote areas.

Red Cross and Red Crescent workers said they were using volunteers to distribute immediately dried food and plastic sheeting for temporary shelters, but that many helpers were themselves victims of the cyclone.

Teams of local doctors were already on the ground and supplies of medicine were on their way from the capital. Assessment teams, however, were still trying to piece together a picture of the devastation.



A FAMILY prepares food inside their cyclone-damaged house in Potualkhali, 152 km south of Bangladesh's capital on Saturday, Nov. 17. AP

"Our estimate is that 900,000 families are affected," said Red Cross official Shafiquzzaman Rabbani. That figure amounts to roughly seven million people.

In many places, villagers said, the dead were quickly being buried in mass graves.

"We have confirmed 2,000 deaths and it is constantly increasing as we get more reports from affected districts," Masood Siddiki, director general of the government's disaster management bureau, told AFP. *AFP*

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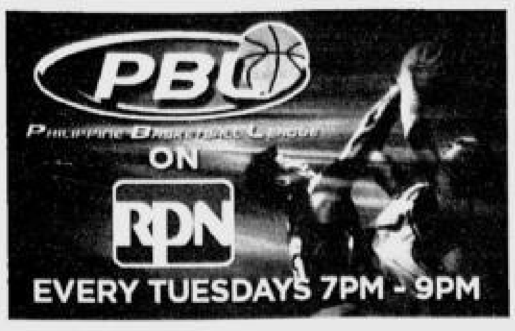
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Sabal, Carreon top Milo Marathon

Technique wins it for Armyman

By Jasmine W. Payo

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SPRING IN HIS STEP: Armyman Cresenciano Sabal soloes it to the finish line. RYAN LIM

THE VETERAN sharpened his strategy with new ideas for the final battle.

After enduring months of disappointment, Cresenciano Sabal turned to a new technique to reclaim the 42K men's crown in the grand finals of the 31st National Milo Marathon yesterday.

Sabal clocked two hours, 22 minutes and 57 seconds in the arduous race that ended at the Quirino grandstand in Manila.

In the women's race, Flordeliza Carreon claimed her first national title with a time of 2:53:20.

With his new strategy, Sabal, the 2005 marathon king, finished strong while his challengers faded.

"It's called volting, there's a bounce in your step," Sabal explained in Filipino. "I tried it for the first time. In regular running, you use all your muscles. In volting, some of your muscles are relaxed. So in the last 10K, you still have enough energy."

Sabal broke away from the lead pack at the 10K mark to finish over two minutes ahead of runner-up Bernardo Desamito (2:25:03) and third-placer Juniel Languido (2:25:07).

"I researched the strategy on the Internet," said Sabal. "When I raced in Kenya last October, I learned how to do it from the world-class Kenyan runners and observed their procedure. Locally, I've seen (race record holder Eduardo) Buenavista do it. I got challenged."

Sabal had all the time to learn the new technique—the lean, 28-year-old Armyman continues to serve an indefinite suspension from the national team.

"I'm willing to train again for the country," said Sabal, penalized by the Philippine Amateur Track and Field Association last July for running in an unsanctioned race.

The Sultan Kudarat native would have wanted to test his volting strategy against Buenavista—who broke Sabal's 2005 record during the Manila leg last July (2:18:53)—and other top challengers including 2006 champion Julius Sermona, Allan Ballester and Roy Vence.

But the four veterans skipped the race, held in partnership with Bayview Park Hotel-Manila, Adidas, and the Department of Tourism, to prepare for the Thailand Southeast Asian Games next month.

Based in Baguio City, the 26-year-old Carreon shook off the rest of the pack early to finish more than seven minutes ahead of runner-up and 2004 champion Estela Diaz (3:01:05) and Mona Liza Ambasa (3:01:58).

"I've been training with Jho-An (Banayag)," said Carreon of the two-time champion, who also missed the race due to her SEAG training.

Sabal and Carreon bagged P75,000 each in the race that drew more than 12,000 runners from all over the country.

Other winners were Raquin Ereneo (34:38) and Mercedita Manipol (39:08) in the men's and women's 10K and Nelbert Ducusin (17:08) and Nhean Barcena (19:37) in the 5K.

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(The Arena)
3 p.m.—Adamson vs San Sebastian
5 p.m.—Ateneo vs La Salle

UNIVERSITY OF SANTO TOMAS MOVED closer to a second straight finals appearance when it outlasted De La Salle, 25-17, 25-16, 18-25, 19-25, 15-8, yesterday in the 2007 Shakey's V-League women's volleyball second conference at The Arena in San Juan.

Suzanne Roces and Venus Bernal combined for 40 points while Mary Jean Balse and Angeli Tabaquero contributed 15 and 10 points, respectively for the Tigresses.

With its seventh straight win, and eighth overall in nine matches, the first-conference champion clinched at least a playoff for a championship berth.

With the loss, La Salle must now sweep its last three semifinal games to force a playoff with the No. 2 squad.

In the opener, Ateneo stayed alive for a finals slot by booting out Adamson University, 27-25, 25-15, 25-22.

The Lady Eagles stayed in third spot at 6-3 even as the Lady Falcons took their second loss in the semifinal round.

Ateneo's Thai import Lithawat Kesinee atoned for her anemic 15-point performance in a losing cause against San Sebastian last Friday, delivering 31 points this time to power the Lady Eagles.

Charo Soriano also dished out an inspired game for Ateneo, scoring on 10 attacks to finish with 11 points while Patricia Taganas, Denise Acevedo, Bea Pascual and Karla Bello combined for 16 points.

Spring five zaps Indonesians

JOHOR, MALAYSIA—THE NBC-SPRING Cooking Oil Selection dumped Indonesia Basketball League's Aspac team, 85-67, Saturday and boosted its bid for a top two finish in the 2007 Johor Invitational basketball tournament at the Larkin Stadium here.

The Cooking Oil Masters of NBC president Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla and Tagaytay Mayor and league EVP Bambol Tolentino tightened their defense in the payoff period to turn what had looked like a thriller into a runaway triumph, the Filipinos' third in four games.

Henry Fernandez's hot perimeter shooting and Danny Capobres' dominating performance in the shaded area lifted the Filipinos' spirit after their sluggish play in the first three quarters.

The Filipinos are playing China's Parklane Club at presstime Sunday.

The Filipinos trailed 18-20 after 10 minutes and were held by the Indons' pesky defense to a 39-39 tie at the turn.

The scores:

NBC-SPRING 85—Fernandez 23, Capobres 16, Lamocha 13, Epondulan 11, Villamin 7, Marquez 6, De Castro 4, Reyes 3, Quibod 2, Napo 2.

ASPAC 67—Prawiro 14, San 13, Vinton 9, David 8, Lie 6, Rinaldo 5, Febrian 4, Rama 2, Gerungan 0, Endratmo 0.

Quarters: 18-20, 39-39, 62-57, 85-67

Manila wraps it up in style

By June Navarro

Medal Tally	G	S	B
Manila	62	44	28
Quezon City	49	27	27
Laguna	41	43	41
Cavite	37	30	34
Iloilo Prov	26	20	20
Naga	21	20	25
Zamboanga	20	8	9
Pasig City	19	10	14
Baguio	15	34	42
Parañaque	14	14	9
M'daluyong	13	5	4
Lipa City	11	10	8
La Union	11	6	9
Iloilo City	10	9	16
Muntinlupa	10	6	5
Batangas	10	3	1
GenSan	9	8	7
Misamis Or	8	8	6
Negros Occ	7	5	4
Marikina	7	3	10
Capiz	7	0	0
P. Princesa	5	1	1
Davao City	4	2	2
Bulacan	4	1	3
C. De Oro	4	2	6
Pangasinan	3	2	3
Antique	3	2	2
Valenzuela	3	2	1
Makati	3	1	1
Las Piñas	2	6	3
Rizal	2	4	4
Angeles City	2	1	5
Lucena	2	1	2
Cam Sur	1	1	4
Ilocos Sur	1	1	0
San Juan	0	2	3
Pasay	0	2	2
Taguig	0	2	2
Koronadal	0	1	4
Malabon	0	1	2
Mindoro Or	0	1	2
Pateros	0	0	3
N. Ecija	0	0	1
Mindoro Occ	0	1	1
Zambales	0	0	1

A BIG LETDOWN IN AQUATics, Manila came to life in other fronts to rule the 2nd Philippine Olympic Festival national championships pulling away yesterday.

The Manilans turned to their gymnasts and archers, who contributed a total of 15 golds on the final day that moved them out of reach of their chief rivals from Quezon City.

Gymnasts Mage Wagan and Arielle Nichole Orella accounted for 11 golds among themselves, while archers Ronalyn Alvarez and Deny Hallarsis added two golds apiece to cap a seven-victory effort by Manila in the sport.

Orella seized the gold in the ribbon, rope, hoop, ball and all-around events in the category 1 of rhythmic gymnastics while Wagan swept the events in category 2. Manila's 11th gold came in the team event.

Hallarsis snagged the gold in the 30-meter and 50m men's recurve and Alvarez added two more—the girls' 50m and 30m recurve.

Along with its supremacy in athletics the other day, Manila finished with 62 gold, 44 silver and 28 bronze medals. Quezon City, which picked up 26 gold medals alone in swimming, wound up with a gold-silver-bronze output of 49-27-27, with Laguna third at 41-43-41.

Louise Sarmiento took a seventh gold for Quezon City at the Trace Aquatics Center in Los Baños, Laguna, after winning the 400-meter freestyle for girls' 17 years old and above.

The 17-year-old Sarmiento also won the 200m individual medley, 100m backstroke, 100m freestyle, 800m free, 200m free and 50m free to become the most bemedaled athlete of the games backed by Globe, Accel, AMA, Asia Brewery and Pagcor.

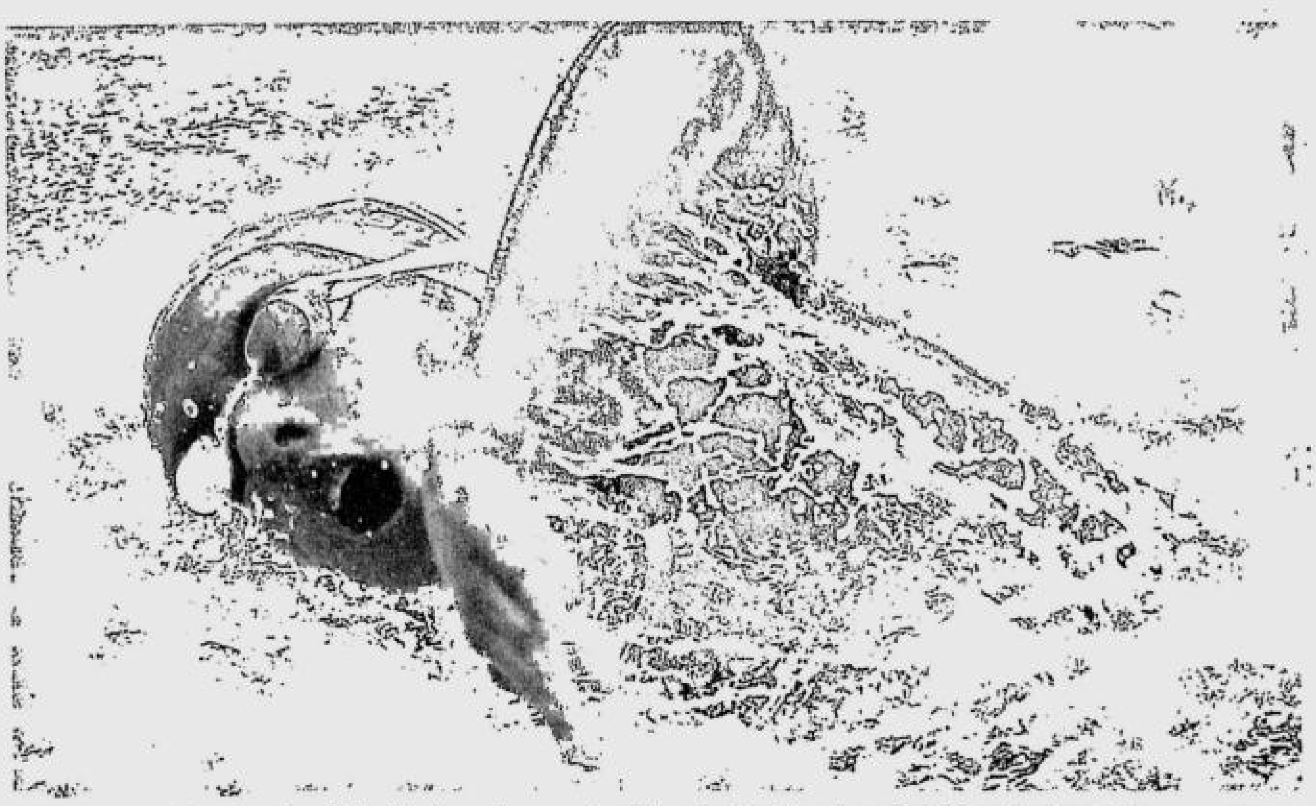
Quezon City also gained seven golds from taekwondo, three from wrestling and another three from powerlifters Bill Blackenship (men's 125kg), Wilbert Cua (100kg) and Eddie Torres (82.5kg).

Manila swimmers only had five golds with Sabrina Ingrid Ilustre winning four. Ilustre, 12, won the 100m breaststroke, 200m IM, 400m IM and 200m breast.

Laguna wound up third built on its exploits in swimming, taekwondo and athletics.

Cavite, which banked on its tracksters the other day, also made hay in gymnastics yesterday as the province collected 10 of the 26 gold medals at stake.

Gymnasts Ananny Albina and Rachelle Joy Camino won the ribbon, ball, rope, hoop and all-around events in level 2 rhythmic gymnastics category 1 and 2, respectively.


LAS Piñas standout Jasmine Alkhaldi churns her way to victory in the 14-and-under 200-meter freestyle. RAFFY LERMA

12TH MARHO BREEDERS CUP

Robust run by Macho Man

By Musong R. Castillo

OUTSIDER MACHO MAN CAME from the tail of a six-horse pack last night to rule the 3YO Colts race of the 12th Marho Breeders Cup Racing Festival before a stunned gallery at the Santa Ana Park in Makati.

After selling less than P20,000 out of the total daily double pool of close to P840,000, the John Paul Guce-handled chestnut used the wide-open rail at mid-backstretch to catch the pacesetters and win by half a length over EJ's Magic.

It was the day's biggest upset and the field's longest shot gave away handsome handouts in the betting, with the Pick 6 yielding a dividend of P32,929.

EJ's Magic set a torrid pace and the hot favorite Legendary, ridden by Jonathan Hernandez, gave chase early to make it a two-horse race down the stretch until Macho Man came storming from behind.

Macho Man timed 1 minute and 40 seconds for the mile.

Triple Crown hopeful Es Twenty Six, ridden by Jessie B. Guce, routed a compact 3YO Filly field in an impressive 1:39 also over the mile. It won by four lengths over second choice Treasured Ack.

Sent off as the overwhelming first pick with sales of P770,479 out of the daily double handle of P1,143,181, Es Twenty Six posted quarter times of 25, 24', 23' and 26.

Landed Visa, under Val Dilema, rallied to salvage third place over stablemate Defiant and Zarate.

The favored Don Enrico pulled away after rounding the final straight to rule the Juvenile Colts race with a time of 1:33.6 for the 15/16 distance.

Second choice Arithmetic, handled expertly by Patty Dilema, won the Juvenile Fillies race by two lengths over Speed Madonna.

Arithmetic clocked a respectable 1:34.6 broken down in 18, 24, 25, 27' for the 1,500-meter journey to also win P550,000.

Pagulayan trips Gallego for Negros title

SEVEN-RACK cluster wins it for Alex Pagulayan.

By Marlon Bernardino, *Contributor*

DUMAGUETE CITY—ALEX PAGULAYAN outclassed Ramil Gallego, 13-9, to rule the Negros Oriental International 9-Ball Championship at the Dumaguete Convention Center on Saturday night.

The 28-year-old Pagulayan clustered seven straight racks to turn a 2-4 deficit into a comfortable 9-4 lead which he never relinquished.

Pagulayan pocketed $20,000 while Gallego, a five-time Japan champion, settled for $10,000. Both finalists also received a mobile phone each.

"I was very cautious all throughout because I knew Bebeng (Gallego) is also good," said Pagulayan.

Pagulayan trounced Elmer Haya, 11-5, in the semifinal to arrange a titular showdown with Gallego, an 11-4 winner over Jarry Pelayo.

Pelayo and Haya each won $5,000.

Gallego did himself in by fouling three times against Pagulayan during the latter's seven-rack streak.

Gallego had a chance to close in at 9-11 count after Pagulayan's dry break but failed to capitalize. From there, Pagulayan never looked back.

"I learned a lot from Alex in this match," said Gallego, whose victims in the tourney included Edgar Acaba, 9-8; Rodolfo "Boy Samson" Luat, 9-8; European ace Konstantin Stepanov of Russia, 9-1; ex-US Open champion Corey Deuel of the United States, 9-5; 1996 World 9-Ball Champion Ralf Souquet of Germany, 9-6; and current National Open champion Lee Vann Corteza, 9-6, in the loser's bracket.

Gallego's only other loss was against Haya, 8-9, during the opening round last Wednesday.

The Negros championship featured nine former World Pool Champions—Pagulayan, Efren "Bata" Reyes, Ronato Alcano of the Philippines, Johnny Archer of the United States, Souquet and Thorsten Hohmann of Germany, Wu Chia-ching of Taiwan, Kunihiko Takahashi of Japan and Mika Immonen of Finland.

Norman Mailer, 84, had beer at the Big Dome

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

THERE'S WIDE-EYED DISBELIEF, THE usual big wow, whenever it is stated that Norman Mailer was here.

But, more than shock, the 32-year-old news which, during normal times, should've been page-one stuff, is received with happy amazement.

"Norman Mailer dead at 84," said a text message from boxing expert Nick Giongco of Manila Bulletin the other Sunday.

It's both odd and melodramatic, but the information reached this reporter while he was at the Araneta Coliseum, covering the World Pool Championship on Nov. 11.

Yes, this was the exact historic venue where Mailer, the greatest American writer of his time, positioned himself, selfless and invisible, in an unlit area to observe the weigh-in for the Thrilla in Manila of Oct. 1, 1975.

* * *

Giongco, who rapidly developed into a big Mailer fan, could not believe that his idol was once right here.

"Wow, is that so, sir?" said Giongco, who may be just learning his first steps in 1975.

It was an unusual period in the history of the nation, reeling under the bloody boots of a tyrant.

Ferdinand Marcos was at the peak of Martial Law powers and he had Muhammad Ali, then the greatest fighter of the period, as state guest.

Mailer, no doubt, was here also on the invitation of the Philippine government.

Sorry, but all other luminaries, except maybe Marcos himself, were pushed into the inside pages, if they ever got due notice.

* * *

Reason: Ali was big news, the only news.

Anyway, those who missed meeting—or plainly observing— the great Mr. Mailer could not be blamed.

He was not the sort who came to be noticed and bask in his celebrity.

There were the other big names in American sportswriting, Red Smith, with famous shiny pate, and the younger Dave Anderson, to name only two.

Youthful Filipino sports scribes, like Ding Marcelo and Al Mendoza, tried to get the autographs of these two noted American journalists.

In fact, these younger colleagues were themselves amazed upon learning much later that, yes, Norman Mailer was right there at the Big Dome.

* * *

"Hope I could go back to Antipolo," Mailer, in light blue bush jacket and matching slacks, suggested during a break in the weigh-in.

His eyes smiled a piercing smile as he propped a cold bottle of San Miguel beer upon his three middle fingers, like an aspirant juggler.

He, definitely, was not trying to be different, but he just looked and loomed new, very original.

He also had a tall, pretty American lady in tow.

Anyway, Mr. Mailer explained, almost shyly, that he served with the US Army in World War II and was part of the campaign around Antipolo.

"Please give me a call at the Intercon after the fight," he suggested.

* * *

Well, as the cliché kings would put it, The Thrilla in Manila, staged the day after Norman Mailer had a beer at ringside, is now history.

By the way, Mailer failed to take the call the day after Ali mauled and stopped Joe Frazier.

A lady's lovely voice on the phone said her friend could not be roused.

So there went the planned trip back to Antipolo for Mailer and this reporter, history down the drain.

Weeks after he left, we tried to search for what he wrote about the Thrilla, but there was none so far.

Truth is that, in writing The Fight, about the Rumble in the Jungle in Zaire of 1974, Mailer succeeded in offering all necessary secret information on boxing for future generations of readers.

As for aspirant writers, or plain deadline beaters, he had one unforgettable legacy.

"Always say something new," he advised, trying not to appear and sound like a sage.

SPORTSWATCH

Champs League q'finals up today

GAMES TODAY (*The Arena, San Juan*)
2 p.m.—Univ. of Mindanao vs Univ. of Visayas
4 p.m.—San Beda vs UST

By Jasmine W. Payo

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE VISAYAS Green Lancers and the University of Mindanao Wildcats collide for a semifinal berth today in the Fil-Oil/Flying V National Collegiate Champions League at The Arena in San Juan.

The knockout encounter between the two squads is set at 2 p.m. with reigning NCAA champion San Beda clashing against the 2006 UAAP winner University of Santo Tomas in the main game at 4 p.m.

UV rode a blistering offensive in the second half as the Green Lancers crushed the Lyceum Pirates, 101-80, Saturday to clinch the last quarterfinal berth.

The scores:

UV 101—Dennison 19, Berame 16, Lanete 14, Mepaña 14, Diputado 12, Slaughter 8, Luga 8, Villanil 6, Lao 2, Lasala 2, Tancongco 0, Arda 0.

LYCEUM 80—Pagente 19, Santiago 18, Taguibao 13, Calimag 11, Balmaceda 6, Medina 4, Pineda 3, Mendoza 2, Engulo 2, Rimando 2, Abaya 0, Ong 0.

Quarters: 22-19, 37-40, 72-60, 101-80

80 fights in SJC derby today

MORE THAN 80 FIGHTS SIZZLE STARTing at 2 p.m. today in the "Ubusan ng Lahi" 4-stag derby sponsored by Sagupaan Complexor 3000 at San Juan Coliseum.

Veteran cocker Bobbit Pies, who staged the "Rabatitat" derby, SJC's biggest crowd-drawer last year, is hosting the event.

Members of the Pasay Cockpit Cockers Association, SJC Cockers Club, National Cockers Association and the Luzon Gamecock Breeders Association are fielding entries.

P2M staked in Roligon derby

A GUARANTEED PRIZE OF P2 MILLION IS up for grabs in the upcoming "Weder Weder Lang" 5-cock derby slated Dec. 1, 4, 6 and 8 and backed mainly by Lakpue Drug Inc. at Roligon Mega Cockpit in Parañaque.

Hosts Rolly Ligon, Super Ninja Saito and the RBD group pegged the entry fee at P8,800 and minimum bet at P4,400.

"It's the first major cock derby after the moulting season, so we expect a minimum of 200 entries for this event," said Ligon.

Jimenez wins; Miñoza ties for 40th place

HONG KONG—SPAIN'S MIGUEL ANgel Jimenez held on to bogey the final hole and overcome Sweden's Robert Karlsson for his second UBS Hong Kong Open title on Sunday.

Jimenez, also the 2004 winner, finished with a three-under-par 67 for a 265 total to nip overnight leader Karlsson, who double bogeyed the 18th hole to end up in joint second place at 266 at the Hong Kong Golf Club.

Jimenez, 43, walked away with the top prize of $375,000.

Karlsson, who claimed the runner-up spot in Portugal last month, produced a 72 and finished alongside Korean stalwart Choi Kyung-ju who posted a strong 67 and Thailand's Thongchai Jaidee, a two-time Asian number one, who closed with a 65.

Frankie Miñoza emerged as the best Filipino by tying for 40th place after shooting a 70 for 278. Antonio Lascuña carded a 75 and wound up at 280, Juvic Pagunsan finished at 281 after a 73 and Gerald Rosales landed at 287 after a 77.

"It's very nice to win again here, it's great," said Jimenez. *Asian Tour News*

3 teams dispute I-Village golf title

A THREE-CORNERED FIGHT LOOMS AMONG BF Resort, Hillsborough and Tahanan in the 18th Intervillage Golf Tournament Series which ends today at the Mt. Malarayat Golf and Country Club.

Only six points separate the three teams as they play the final 18 holes at the Lipa City course.

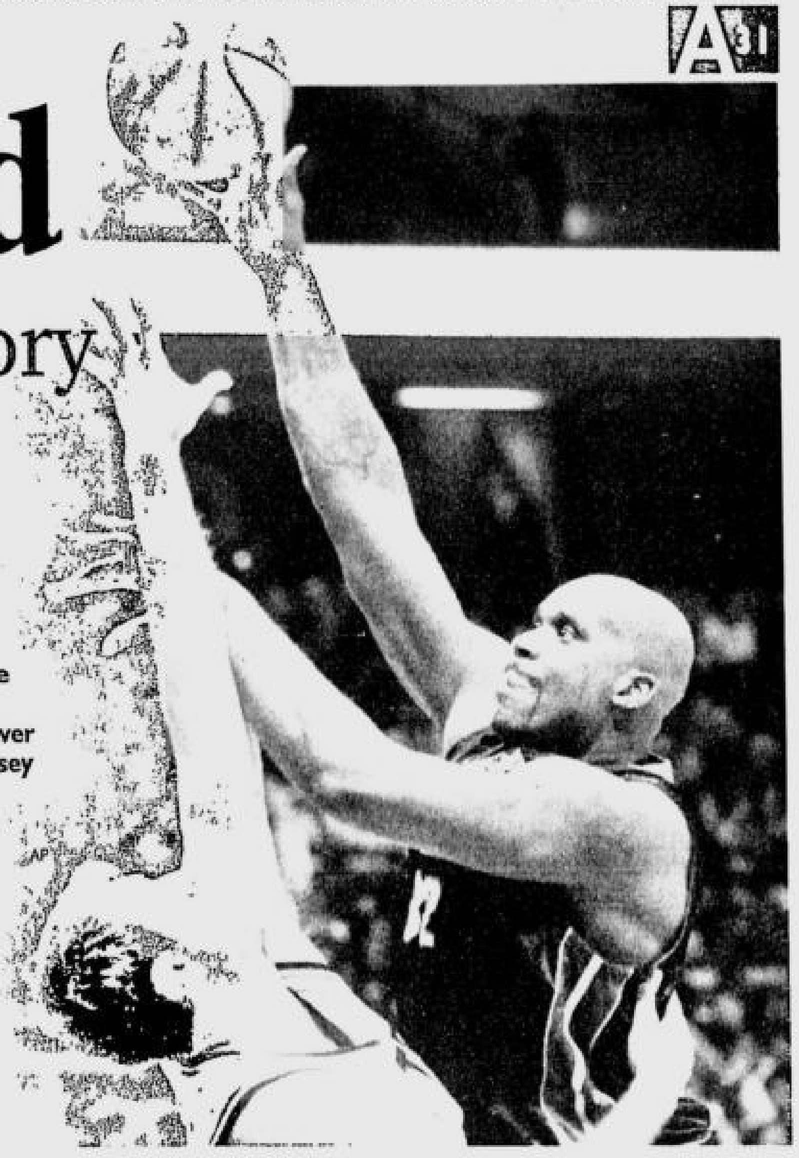
BF Resort, with four players scoring 39 points each, is ahead with 306 points, four up on Hillsborough and six ahead of Tahanan.

Arniel Bondoc, Joey Lalisan, Art Ampaya and Zardi Abellera, who each carded 39 points at the Summit Point last Tuesday, will lead BF Rersort.

Hillsborough will bank on Danny Olanosa, Ed Puno and King Rodrigo while Lito Abad, Danny Gutierrez, Jun Sauler and Beng Ibo banner Tahanan's bid.

Heat halt skid

D-Wade secures Miami victory



MIAMI center Shaquille O'Neal shoots over New Jersey Nets' Nenad Krstic.

EAST RUTHERFORD, NEW JERSEY—Dwyane Wade scored 23 points, Penny Hardaway added 16 in his best game since returning to the NBA, and the Miami Heat beat the New Jersey Nets 91-87 on Saturday for their second victory of the season.

Shaquille O'Neal had 18 points for the Heat, who snapped a three-game skid and sent the Nets to their fifth straight loss. Hardaway was 6-of-6 from the field, making three triples in the fourth quarter.

Wade was only 4-for-17 from the floor in his third game of the season, but made 15 of 20 free throws before a clinching jumper in the final second.

Rookie Sean Williams scored a season-high 22 points in his first career start for the Nets, playing without injured All-Star Vince Carter.

NBA on BTV Today
7 a.m.—Boston vs Orlando
(replay at 9 p.m.)

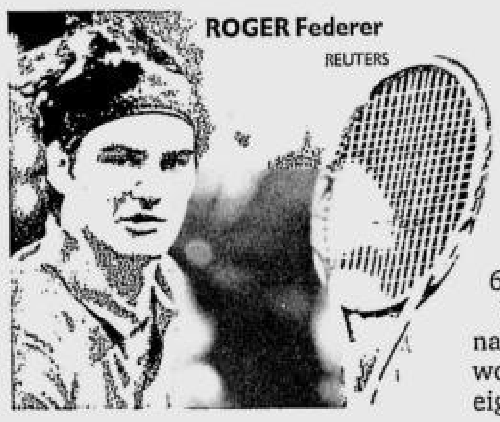
Mavericks 108, Grizzlies 105

At Dallas, Josh Howard matched his season high with 27 points, six during a key fourth-quarter stretch, and Dallas remained unbeaten at home.

Dirk Nowitzki added 21 points, including two critical free throws with eight seconds left, and Devin Harris had 19 points and eight assists to help the Mavericks remain perfect in five home games.

Mike Miller's 23 points, Hakim Warrick's 17 and Pau Gasol's 15 paced the Grizzlies, who've lost three in a row. *AP*

OTHER RESULTS: Pacers 117, Jazz 97; Hornets 100, Timberwolves 82; Suns 115, Rockets 105; Bucks 105, Hawks 96; Bobcats 100, SuperSonics 84; Wizards 109, Trail Blazers 90; Nuggets 115, Knicks 83; Bulls 92, Clippers 73



ROGER Federer
REUTERS

Federer bags 4th Masters plum

SHANGHAI, CHINA—TOP-ranked Roger Federer won his fourth Masters Cup title Sunday, overwhelming No. 6 David Ferrer, 6-2, 6-3, 6-2.

It was the third consecutive dominating performance by Federer, who won his 53rd career title—including eight this year—and ran his record against Ferrer to 8-0.

"I'm so happy," said Federer, who collected $1.2 million and a new car for the win. "This is the year-end tournament that only the best can make it to. For me to win is a fantastic experience."

The Spaniard was simply no match for Federer's blend of spins, power and volleying skills, managing only 10 winners to 38 unforced errors as he was forced to try to do too much with Federer getting everything back. Federer had 30 winners and 29 unforced errors.

Swiss fans said it all with a banner reading, "Shhh! Quiet! Genius at work." *AP*

Poulter takes Dunlop golf by two

MIYAZAKI, JAPAN—ENGLAND'S IAN POULTER SHOT A 1-under-par 69 Sunday to win the Dunlop Phoenix golf tournament by two strokes.

Poulter claimed the $364,250 winner's purse after holding on at the Phoenix Country Club to beat out Spain's Gonzalo Fernandez Castano, who shot a 68.

Defending champion and overnight co-leader Padraig Harrington of Ireland finished six strokes off the pace after a final round 69.

Harrington beat Tiger Woods with a birdie on the second hole of a playoff last year. Woods, who won the tournament in 2004 and 2005, is not taking part this year.

England's Luke Donald (71) tied for third with Japan's Shingo Katayama, who carded a final round 68. *AP*

Guzman decisions Soto

ATLANTIC CITY, NEW JERSEY—WBO junior-welterweight champion Joan Guzman remained undefeated with a unanimous decision over Humberto Soto on Saturday. Guzman (28-0), from the Dominican Republic, used his slick style and strong defense to gain a 12-round, unanimous decision over Soto (43-6-2) of Mexico, at the Borgata Hotel, Casino & Spa. *AP*

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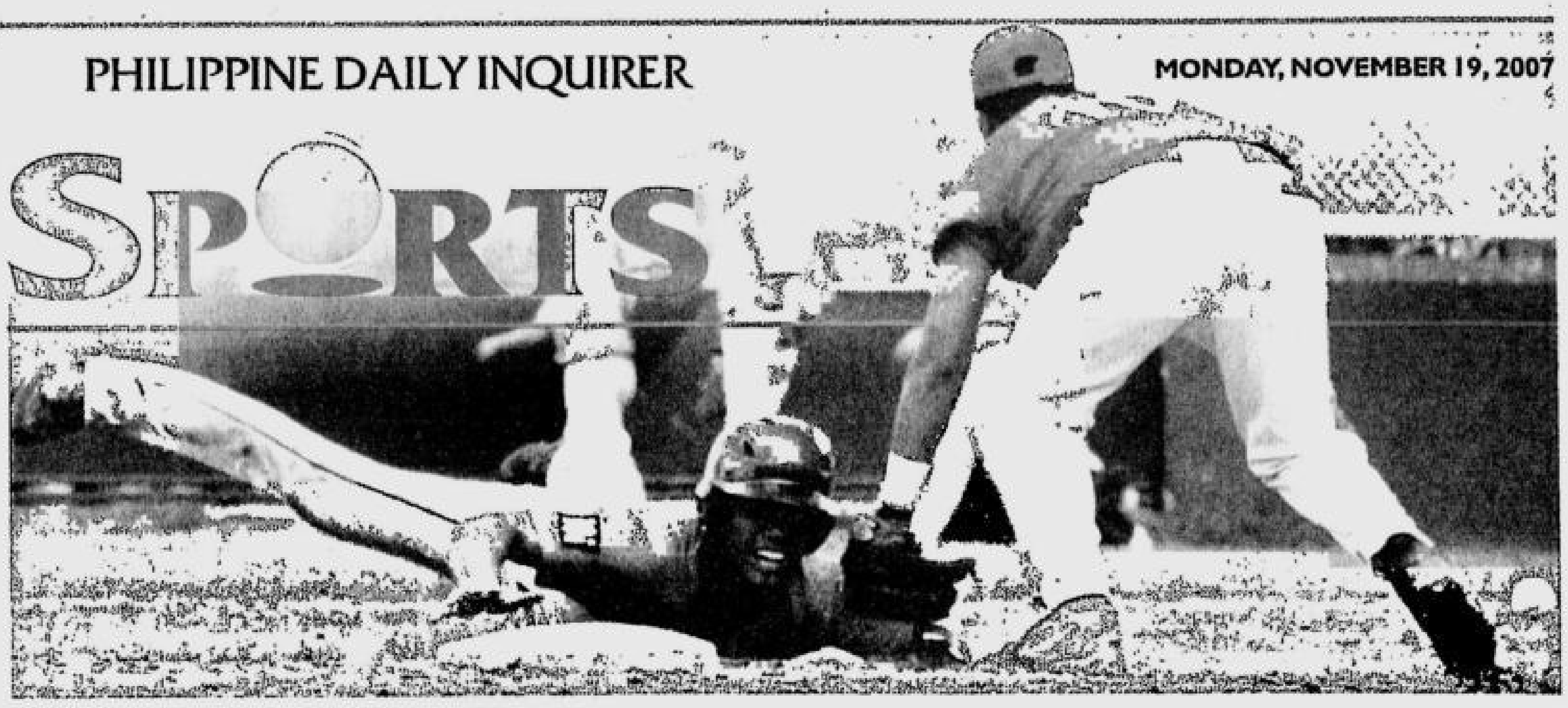


CEBU Dolphins' Jonas Ponce dives back safely to second base, beating the tag of Manila Sharks' Larry Icban in yesterday's game at the Rizal ballpark. RODEL ROTONI

Pitcher powers Manila

By Marc Anthony Reyes

CHARLIE LABRADOR SHOWED UP JOseph Orillana in a duel between national team pitchers and Manila sustained its amazing comeback with a 3-2 nipping of Cebu yesterday to wrest the lead in the Baseball Philippines Series 2 at the Rizal Memorial ballpark.

Labrador struck out seven batters and issued only a hit in the last three innings to finish with a five-hitter and clinch Manila's fourth win in six games.

Orillana gave up eight hits, five in the first three innings, as Manila took an early 3-0 lead. And when Cebu rallied with two runs in the lower sixth, Labrador handcuffed the enemy for good.

"We are beginning to play as one unit," said Labrador. "I hope we can sustain this teamwork and continue our focus."

The Dolphins slumped to their second successive defeat for a 4-3 slate, in a tie with Makati which came up with a 14-hit attack in a 4-2 win over Dumaguete later in the day.

The loss snapped Dumaguete's three-win streak and dropped the Unibikers to 3-4.

The earlier match between Taguig and Marikina was called off because the field was unplayable after Saturday night's rains. Taguig is still in the basement at 1-4, while Marikina stood at 3-3.

Catcher Rommel Roja broke the ice for Manila in the first inning by scoring off an error and the Sharks added two more runs in the fifth through Virgilio Roxas and Richard Leonor.

Roxas doubled, reached third on a sacrifice fly by Marvin Malig and scored on a passed ball. Leonor also doubled before reaching home on a single by Bambol Servo.

Run-scoring doubles by Jon de Ubago and Anthony Olaybar in the sixth moved Cebu within one at 2-3, but Labrador pitched his way out of further trouble from there.

STANDINGS	W	L
Manila	4	2
Cebu	4	3
Makati	3	3
Dumaguete	3	3
Marikina	3	3
Taguig	1	4

GAMES SATURDAY
(*Rizal ballpark*)
7 a.m.—Cebu vs Taguig
10:30 a.m.—Manila vs Dumaguete
2 p.m.—Makati vs Marikina

The linescores: R H E
MANILA 100-020-000—3 8 2
CEBU 000-002-000—2 5 4

MAKATI 000-030-010—4 12 4
DUMAGUETE 000-002-000—2 8 0

Riner upends Taiwanese for Holcim crown

By Marc Anthony Reyes

SWISS ACE NICOLE RINER BREEZED PAST Chinese Taipei's Chang Kai-chen, 6-3, 6-2, yesterday to capture the singles title of the Holcim ITF women's tennis tournament at the Manila Polo Club shellcourts.

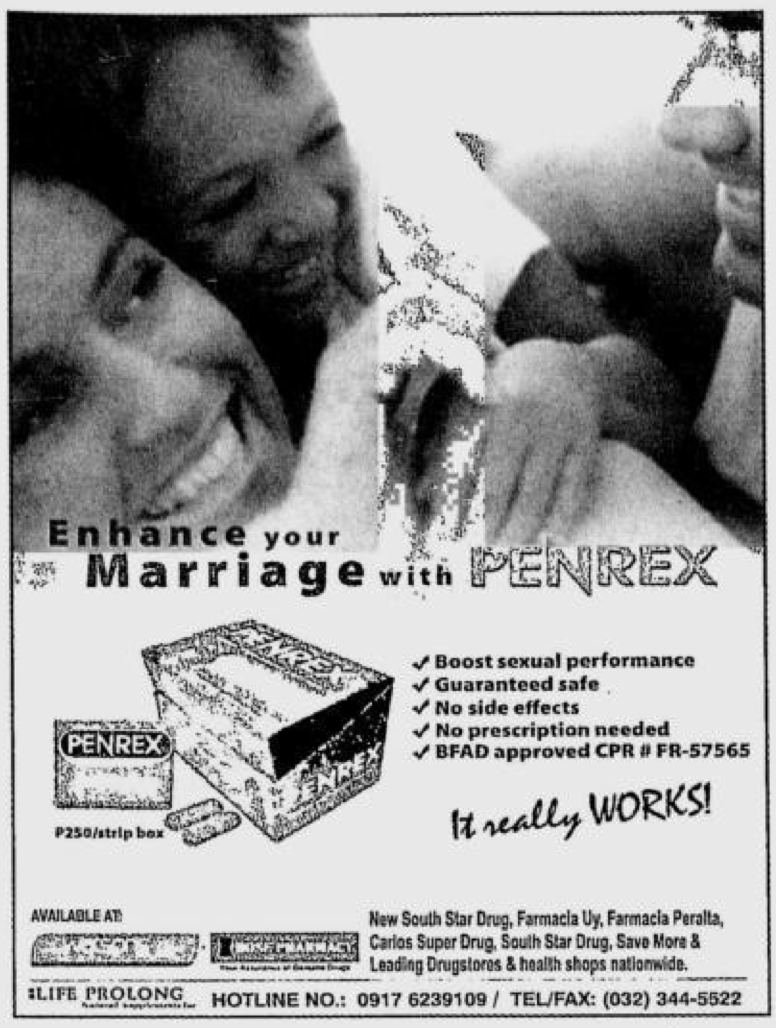
The seventh seed Riner used her vast experience to whip her Taiwanese foe and rule the first week of the two-phase competitions.

The 17-year-old stunner, a member of the Swiss Fed Cup team, won her fifth title this year and is expected to climb up the world rankings from her current 637th.

She dropped just a single set in the tournament and that came way back in the second round when big-hitting South Korean Kang Seo-kyung forced her to three sets before losing, 6-2, 1-6, 6-0.

In the finals, Riner twice broke Chang to take a 5-3 lead in the first set.

Chang, seeded fifth, tried to come back in the second set but there was no stopping the 5-foot-10 Riner who unloaded a stream of winners to seal the victory.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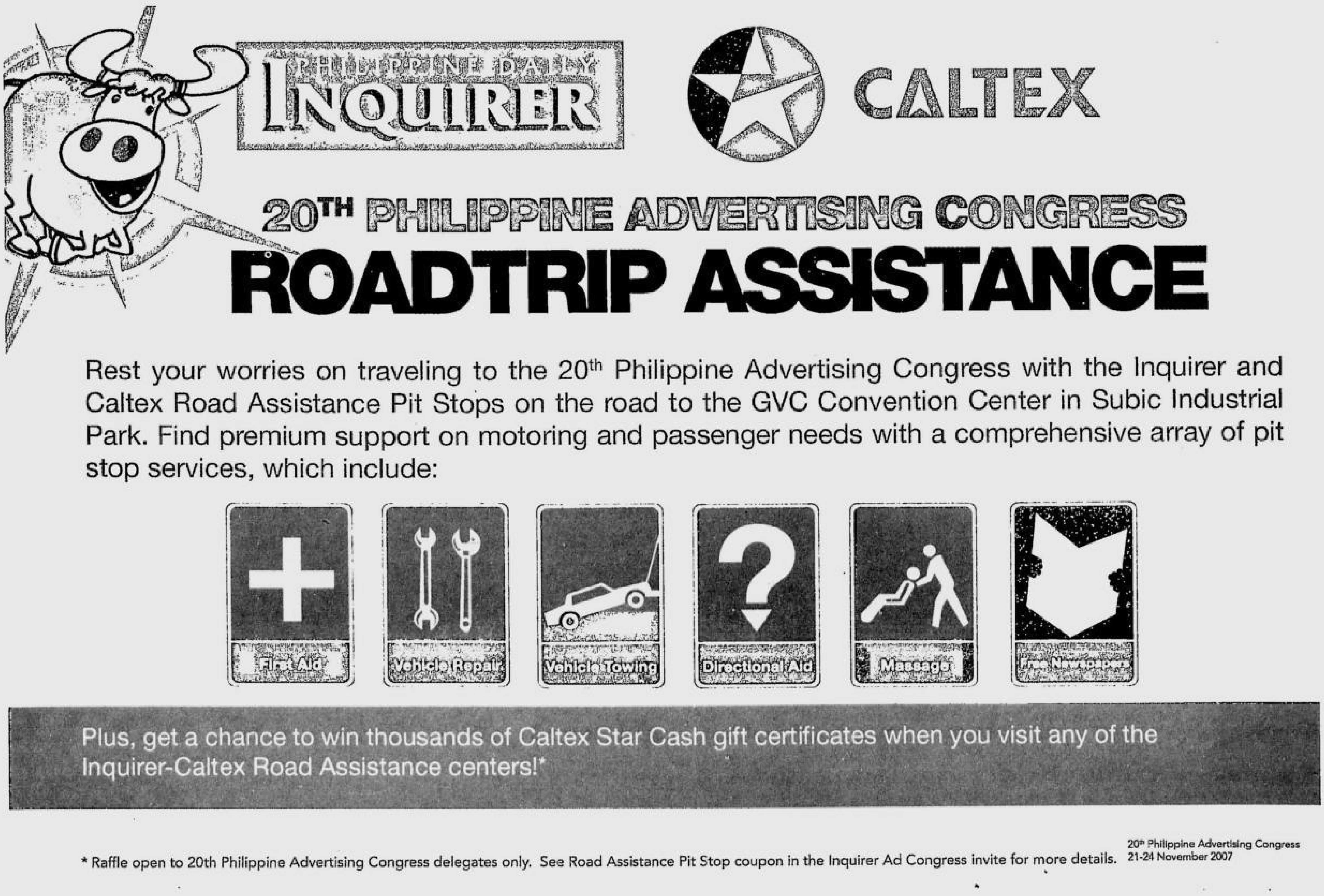
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Net 'hot money' inflows up to $274M in Oct.

BSP rate cut, rosy prospects boost investments

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINES ATTRACTED $274 MILLION IN net foreign investments in local stocks, bonds and money markets in October, dwarfing the $35.8 million generated in September, due to the improved domestic and global investor sentiment.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. reported Friday that the resurgence of strong foreign portfolio inflows, also called "hot money" due to their volatile nature, brought the 10-month net windfall to $3.7 billion, or nearly double the $1.9 billion in net inflows for the same period last year.

"Several factors helped boost investor confidence during the month, including the Bangko Sentral's 25-basis-point reduction in policy rates, the upward adjustment in the International Monetary Fund's 2007 growth forecast for the Philippine economy to 6.3 percent from 5.8 percent in July, easing concerns about the US economy, and several reports of strong third-quarter corporate earnings," Tetangco said.

This developed as appetite for emerging market assets improved following the US Federal Reserve's steeper-than-expected half-a-percentage-point cut in its benchmark interest rates in mid-September. The BSP's own interest rate cut on Oct. 4 also lured more investments to the local stock market.

On a gross basis, the BSP reported that foreign portfolio investments registered by major foreign custodian banks in October totaled $1.2 billion, 79 percent of which went to shares listed on the Philippine Stock Exchange.

The balance went to placements in peso-denominated government securities, primarily fixed rate treasury notes or FXTNs. These inflows exceeded capital repatriations of $955.2 million, which arose from divestments from PSE-listed shares and government securities and withdrawal of money market placements and peso deposits.

For the first 10 months of the year, fresh foreign portfolio investments amounted to $13.4 billion as against capital outflows of $3.7 billion.

"The generally upbeat outlook on the domestic economy sustained the positive investor sentiment," Tetangco said. Gross investments in PSE-listed shares amounted to $11 billion for the 10-month period, accounting for 82 percent of total. Property, telecommunication, utility and holding firms captured about 74 percent of investments in these shares. Peso-denominated gov-

NET 'HOT MONEY'/ B5

INDICATORS

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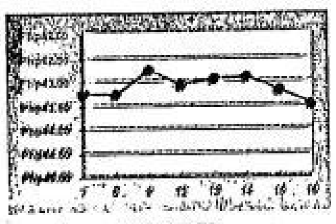


NOVEMBER

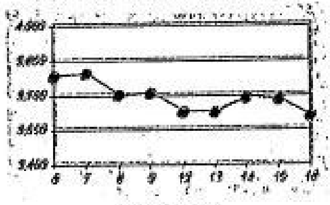
PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P 43.5 = $1

As of 5 p.m., Nov. 16, 2007

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



NOVEMBER

(See stock market report on Page B8)

Bearish trading seen

SHARE PRICES ARE EXPECTED to track developments in the US market amid persistent fears relating to the subprime lending crisis there, analysts said.

They said the stock market ignored a widely expected 25-basis-point cut in interest rates by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas last Thursday.

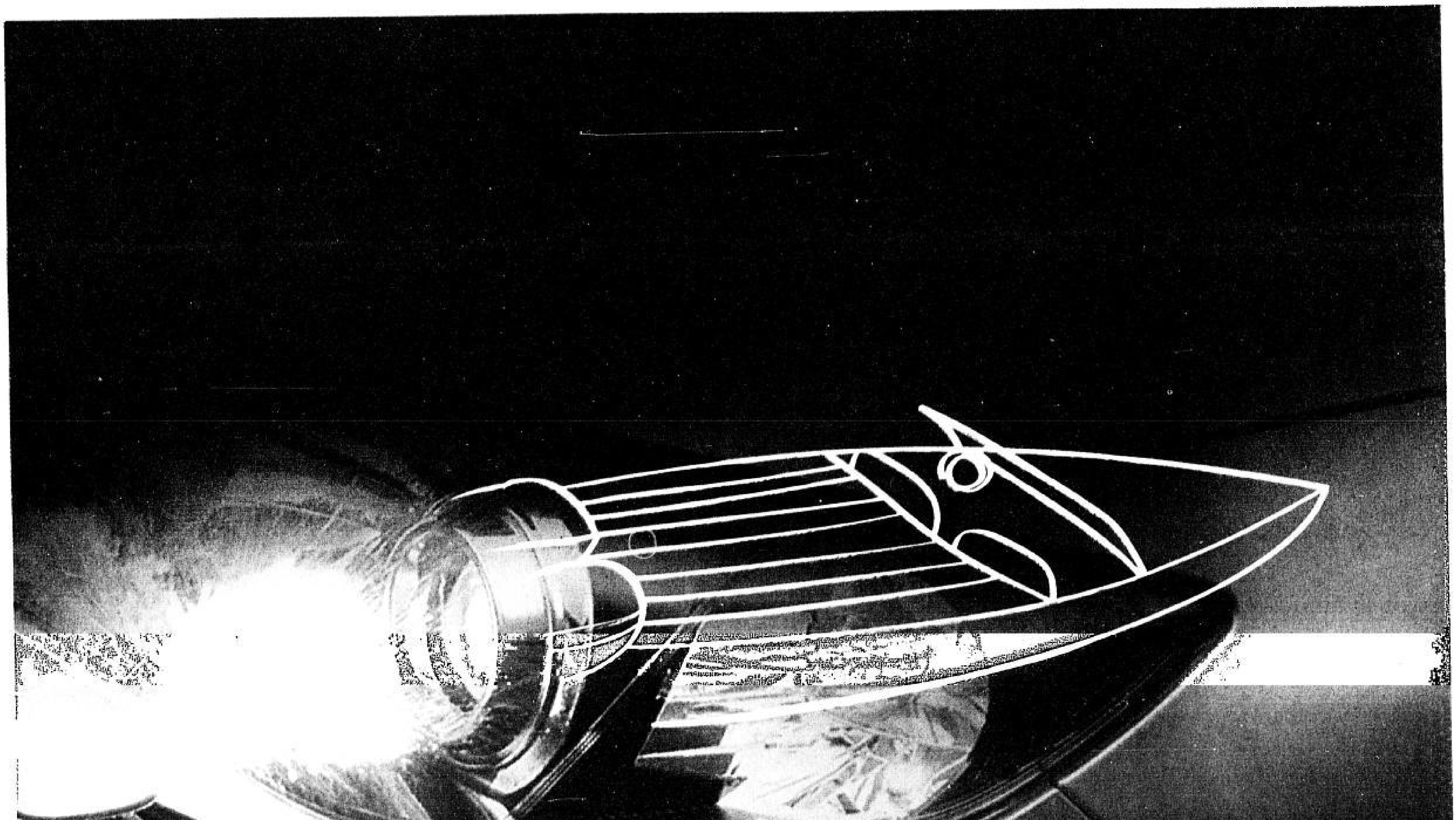
"The outlook (for this week) may be for further declines toward the 3,500 level. The market ignored a rate cut because that was largely expected already and net foreign selling last (week) was P7.5 billion," PCCI Securities president Francisco Liboro observed.

Jovis Vistan, head of research at AB Capital Securities, said that after companies reported their third-quarter earnings and the BSP

BEARISH/ B7

IN THIS ISSUE

No Free Lunch: Fearful forecasts? /B2
Peso tempers rise of gasoline prices /B3
Tax leaks cost gov't P107B in '06 /B5



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Fearful forecasts?

LAST FRIDAY'S SESSION ON "FEARLESS forecasts" at the annual meeting of the Philippine Economic Society (PES) yielded an interesting mix of views on our economy's performance and outlook.

Featured were viewpoints from a credit-rating agency, a financial services firm and the academe.

Contrary to what some members of the audience had been jokingly anticipating, there were no "fearful" forecasts, at least as far as the usual numbers are concerned. In fact, the more significant parts of the discussion were not so much the numerical forecasts of growth, foreign exchange rate and other financial indicators, but the opportunities and risks facing our economy in the year ahead.

Growth outlook

Most of us now recognize that the growth in gross domestic product (GDP) is not and should not be taken to be the primary measure of an economy's strength and well-being. Still, GDP growth remains the first thing that people ask concerning the economy's performance, and how the economy will fare in the year ahead.

On this, there was consensus among all four speakers that the economy would grow more slowly in 2008 compared to this year.

There appeared to be a general agreement that this year will see GDP growth in the neighborhood of (and slightly above) 7 percent, given that the official statistics report an average 7.3 percent growth so far for the first half of the year. But the numbers given by all four speakers for 2008 GDP growth were in the 6.4 to 6.7 percent range.

The lowest estimate came from the credit-rating agency; the highest estimate was mine (the other representative from academe had it at 6.5). In reality, a few decimal points' difference doesn't really matter at all—the difference, as statisticians would say, is not significant. Still, these numerical forecasts reflect a general expectation of more moderate growth next year compared to this year.

External drag

Why the anticipated slowdown? The biggest factor is the general slowdown in global economic growth that is widely expected, driven largely by what is happening in the US economy, still the world's largest.

The US slowdown, due to its domestic housing slump and the consequent impacts on American consumer spending, will permeate most economies as the US tends to be a dominant trade and investment partner to other economies, large or small.

Speakers pointed out, however, that the Philippines had become less and less linked with the US economy in recent years, but more and more with China. The latter has already dislodged America as our largest export buyer, taking up one fifth (20 percent) of our exports, against 16 percent for the US. In contrast, the US took 38 percent of our merchandise exports back in 1990, while China was a non-entity in our foreign trade then, taking less than one percent of our exports at the time.

This means that the US slowdown will have minimal effect on us. However, if China does slow down—and they have in fact been trying hard to do so in recent years, with no success so far—then the dampening effect on our economy would be stronger. We need to pray, in particular, that China would not hit the "hard landing" that many observers fear may be inevitable, citing the "law of gravity" (that is, what goes up must go down—and for China, it could mean crashing down!).

Domestic drivers

Still, the more important element in our economic outlook concerns what goes on within our own economy. This is where there are strong opportunities—which is what encourages the bulls among us—but along with them, persistent risks and threats—which drives the more bearish forecasts.

The bulls argue that our investment slump of recent years—something I have written much about lately—implies that there is nowhere to go but up on investment spending. Public investment has already led the way so far, with a 39.6-percent expansion in government construction, along with a 13.5-percent boost in government consumption spending, being entirely responsible for jacking up our growth beyond 7 percent from the more normal levels of 5-6 percent.

A well-regarded analyst (not one of the PES speakers), points to the large infrastructure investments lined up by the government over the next few years. She also cites numerous stockbrokerage reports of substantial investment intentions by listed companies—apparently spurred by the fact that companies are awash with cash after strong earnings in the past two years.

Risks and threats

The bears see the persistent risks and threats, along with our uninspiring track record on governance, as a dominating drag on our potential for accelerated growth. Worsening tax revenue performance this year in the face of dwindling assets for privatization puts to question the sustainability of the government-led growth we have seen of late. Add to that the drag on the private sector from drastic peso appreciation (i.e. leading to slower remittance-driven consumption, penalty on exports, etc.), perceptions of massive graft

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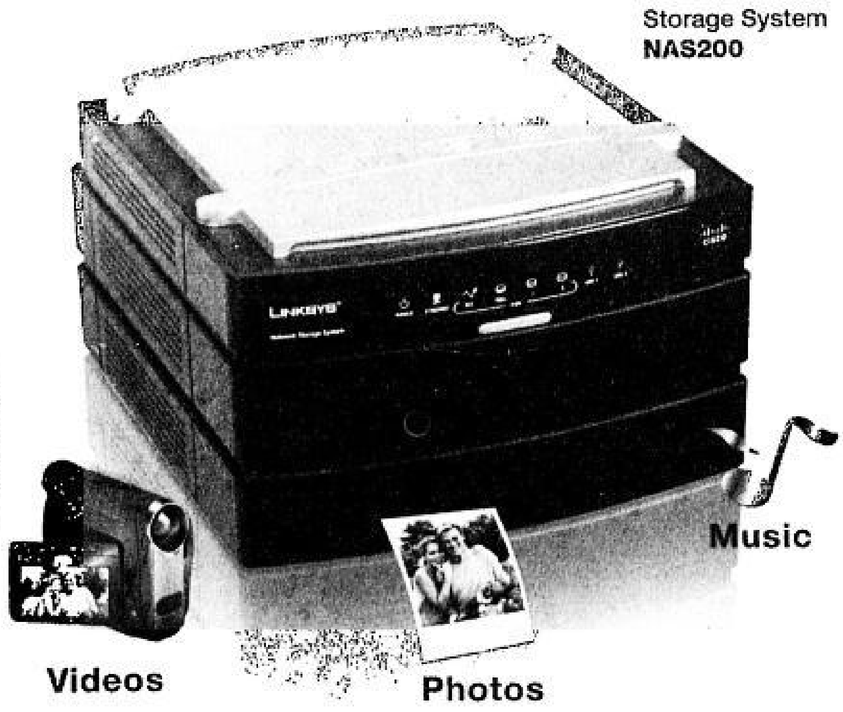

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Peso tempers rise of gasoline prices

BSP still mindful of local currency's impact on exports

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE SHARP APPRECIATION OF THE PESO—Asia's best performing currency this year—tempered the spike in local gasoline prices by about P2 from January to October, according to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

In a report the BSP recently presented to Malacañang, the estimates on the average savings for both diesel and unleaded gasoline were based on the peso's rise against the US dollar according to the weighted average of about 51 at the start of the year to 46.88 as of end-October.

In terms of closing rates, the local currency is presently trading at the 42-43 level. The report presented evidence on how an appreciating peso was helping the country withstand the inflationary impact of soaring global oil prices.

"A stronger peso helps dampen inflationary pressures," the BSP reported, pointing out that a one-peso gain against the US dollar translates to a 0.043-percentage point reduction in average inflation.

Based on the central bank's inflation-targeting simulations, a one-percent peso appreciation would slash inflation by about 0.14 percentage point. Since the start of the year, the local currency has rallied by over 14 percent.

Citing data from the Department of Energy, the BSP reported that average gasoline prices had risen from 35.75 per liter as of January to 42.45 per liter as of end-October, while the 10-month average stood at 39.18 per liter.

On the other hand, global oil prices have risen faster, based on Dubai prices, from an average of $61.59 per barrel at the start of the year to $87 per barrel at end-October. The 10-month average stood at $79.41 per barrel.

Aside from cushioning the impact of runaway oil prices, the BSP cited the national government's interest savings from the peso appreciation. In 2006, the government trimmed its debt servicing by about P2.2 billion due to the peso's strength.

Last year's savings, the BSP said, would enable the government to build 5,867 new classrooms or 157.14 kilometers of asphalt roads or 4,536 linear meters of reinforced concrete bridges.

But the BSP also admitted that a strengthening peso is hurting exporters, the tourism sector and households being supported by overseas remittances.

"Mindful of the potential impact of a strong peso on the export sector, the BSP has undertaken measures to temper the appreciation pressure and maintain overall stability in the foreign exchange market," the report said.

Taiwan in dire need of RP sand, gravel

By Ronnel W. Domingo

TAIWAN IS EXPLORING POSSIBLE arrangements with the Philippines for the importation of sand and gravel as demand in that country continues to dramatically outpace its domestic supply.

Steve Ruey-Long Chen, Taiwan's minister of economic affairs, said on Friday he was in talks with government officials to secure supply, especially since the Philippines is the closest possible source of imports.

Taiwan has been suffering from a supply crunch since China imposed a ban on the export of aggregates for construction effective last March 1.

"Sand and gravel is one of our priority areas in relation to trade with the Philippines," Chen said. "We import 27 percent of the supply needed in our construction industry."

According to the Taiwan Government Information Office, the Public Construction Commission had activated a mechanism to ensure a steady supply of sand and gravel.

Taiwan GIO also said that Taipei has been encouraging imports from the Philippines to help relieve the shortage of gravel in the wake of the China ban.

Taipei has since extended aid to its construction firms in importing 3 million cubic meters of gravel from the Philippines to avert the shelving of projects.

As early as mid-2006, Taiwan has been exploring trade arrangements with the Philippines after China—which was then providing a third of Taiwan's sand and gravel imports—gave notice on the ban.

Back then, Trade Undersecretary Elmer C. Hernandez had said Taiwan wanted to purchase up to $250 million worth of sand and gravel yearly from the Philippines under an economic cooperation effort between Taipei and Manila.

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The Nissan Frontier Navara

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Never has the tag "all-new" been more appropriate; and never has the legendary pickup looked so good.

Reworked in a multitude of ways, the Navara is all that ever made the Frontier great. And – as we found out – a hell of a lot more.

BREAKING THE MOLD & RAISING THE BAR.
Call it the Tiger Woods of trucks – for like the celebrated golfer, the Navara is so far ahead of the curve, its arrival on the scene is not just the changing of the guard, it signals a change in the very nature of the game. Indeed, if you think you know all about pickups, think again.

TRUCK OUT BACK, SUV UP FRONT.
For a vehicle meant to do the crude, ugly jobs, the Navara comes with an incredible amount of style and refinement. It is a study in sturdiness and aerodynamics, with flared wheel arches, and crisp, smooth lines.

The new pickup's design theme is a departure from the Frontiers we know. With its integrated overfender and front bumper, imposing grillwork, and hulking stance, the Navara's physique resembles that of its full-sized brother, the Nissan Titan. Sleeker and sexier, it now stands on 16-inch alloy wheels. Front foglamps come standard, as do chrome side mirror housings, and side step tubes.

A front independent suspension with coil springs coupled with longer rear leaf springs provide a smoother ride.

Inside, cabin comforts rival those of the best SUVs. The dash is trimmed in handsome beige and a brushed metal-like finish. Seats are clad in beige leather (standard on 4x4 models), and you sit high up in a commanding position, with all controls well within reach. A shift-on-the-fly system allows you to engage 4WD from 2WD with the simple turn of a dial, all without having to stop.

a cabin clad in beige and brushed metal

shift-on-the-fly

illuminated ignition switch

Other conveniences abound, like the illuminated ignition switch (no more fumbling in the dark) and the assortment of bins, holders and cubby-holes for everything from maps to water bottles.

ladder frame with 8 cross members

It is enough to prompt critics to call the Navara "the closest thing a truck comes to a proper car."

IT'S ALL ABOUT BEING FIRST AND ONLY.
Excellence is part of the Navara's pedigree. The Nissan Frontier is the first and only truck line to hold the Number One spot (based on number of units sold) for four consecutive years.

six-speed manual transmission

The Navara keeps the Frontier tradition of innovation, once again reinventing the pickup and setting a new benchmark with 6 SPEED MANUAL TRANSMISSION. Unheard of in pickups, the new innovation promises enhanced performance and better fuel efficiency.

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Consider these: THE LARGEST FUEL TANK CAPACITY (80L, perfect for long journeys into the rough) and the first to offer standard BRAKE ASSIST for sure footing during stops. The Frontier is also the only pickup to use a LADDER TYPE FRAME WITH 8 CROSS MEMBERS for added rigidity and strength to handle heavy duty cargo, and to limit body roll.

MORE ROOM!
The new Navara is a massive 5,230mm long. Its cockpit area is thus larger, and built to more car-like dimensions, providing a better driving experience and a more comfortable ride for passengers in the rear. Most of the wheelbase increase pushes the rear wheels further backwards, and the payoff is that the Navara has a wider, deeper bed, giving you a larger load area.

MOST POWER!
Hauling all that load is the work of a YD25DDTi 2nd Generation Common Rail Turbo Intercooler Diesel Engine – the most powerful one around – pumping out 174 HORSEPOWER RATING AND 403 Nm OF TORQUE for 4WD, THE MOST IN ITS CLASS. That's more than enough to climb muddy inclines or tow a trailerful of goods. All with minimal emissions and engine vibration.

SAFETY ZONE.
The Navara's construction conforms to Nissan's patented ZONE BODY CONCEPT, with designated crumple zones to absorb the energy of an impact, and a rigid safety zone to shelter occupants from harm.

most powerful engine in its class

The cabin space features 2 SRS FRONT AIRBAGS, side impact beams to guard against broadside crashes, and 3-point front and rear seatbelts. Safeguarding driver control on and off-road, a Limited Slip Differential (standard on 4x4 models) reassigns power to the wheels with greatest traction. ABS prevents wheel lock during sudden stops, and ELECTRONIC BRAKEFORCE DISTRIBUTION balances braking power between the truck's front and rear end – vital help, especially with a fully loaded bed. A 3rd brake lamp provides early warning to following cars.

ABS, Load Sensing Valve & Electronic Brakeforce Distribution

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BO. PUNTOD
Min. Bid Price: P342,600

SAM_CDO 216 RSDL LOT
LA. 413 sqm
Ramoncita Velez St.,
APOVEL SUBD., Bulua District
Min. Bid Price: P935,000

SAM_CDO220 RSDL LOT
BRGY. CARMEN
(near NIA Office)

Lot Area		Min. Bid Price
600 sqm.	P	268,778
1,409 sqm.	P	901,752

SAM_CDO221 AGRI LOT
LA. 28,907 sqm.
(near Women's Dev't Center)
BRGY. CANITO-AN
Min. Bid Price:P3,685,643

SAM_CDO225 RSDL LOT
LA. 500 sqm.
(Inside Agapi drive Subd.)
Tibasak, MACASANDIG
Min. Bid Price: P625,000

SAM_CDO227 COMM'L LOT
LA. 442 sqm.
(adjacent to Xavier Univ.)
HAYES ST. POBLACION
Min. Bid Price:P4,525,717

SAM_CDO228 COMM'L LOT
MAKAHAMBUS Burgos St. Pob.
(Near FaithTabernacle Churh)

Lot Area		Min. Bid Price
349 sqm.	P	1,794,000
618 sqm.	P	3,177,000

SAM_CDO231 AGRI LOT
LA. 47,975 sqm.
(near Catanico Elem. Schl.)
Catinaco, SINONOP DIST.
Min. Bid Price:P4,077,875

SAM_CDO232 RSDL LOT
LA. 1,021 sqm.
(Inside Villa Ernesto Subd.)
VILLA ERNESTO SUBD.
Phase 2, Gusa
Min. Bid Price:P706,503

SAM_CDO233 RSDL LOT
LA. 27,929 sqm.
(near Bulabal Elem. Schl.)
BALUBAL
Min. Bid Price:P4,747,930

SAM_CDO235 RSDL LOT
(w/ 2stry. H&L & single Stry. H&L)
LA. 2,130 sqm. F.A. 338 sqm.
Super highay, KAUSWAGAN
Min. Bid Price:P4,089,272

SAM_CDO237 2-STRY H&L
LA. 1,662 sqm FA. 173 sqm.
(across the property of Oro Rama Mega Center)
LAPASAN
Min. Bid Price: P8,310,000

COMPOSTELA VALLEY

SAM_CMP240 HOUSE & LOT
LA. 1,204 sqm. FA. 505 sqm.
(near Rural Bank)
Judge E. Chavez St.,
POB. NABUNTURAN
Min. Bid Price:P2,311,495

SAM_CMP241 RSDL BLDG.
LA. 300 sqm.
Malasugan-Panag Rd.
Brgy. Panag
Bo. Katipunan, NEW BATAAN
Min. Bid Price:P255,000

SAM_CMP244 RSDL LOT
LA. 7,727 sqm.
Penaranda cor. Gen. Ebuen Sts.
POBLACION MONYAKO
Min. Bid Price:P16,419,875

DAVAO
Text 09198209662

SAM_DAV 251 AGRI LOT
LA. 39,366 sqm
(near San Agustin Chapel)
Sitio Ramihan, TORIL
Min. Bid Price: P13,089,195

SAM_DAV252 HOUSE & LOT
LA. 1,334 sqm.
(near Pilipinas Ave.)
Zamboanga cor. Samal Sts.
INSULAR VILL.,PII, Buhangin
Min. Bid Price:P7,683,224

SAM_DAV255 RESIDENTIAL / COMMERCIAL LOT
LA. 157 sqm. (near University Of Immaculate Concepcion)
Bonifacio St., STA. ANA DIST.
Min. Bid Price: P2,402,100

SAM_DAV256 RSD'L LOT
LA. 300,000 sqm.
Brgy. Baliok DIST. OF TALOMO
Min. Bid Price: P53,638,053

SAM_DAV257 RSD' L LOT
LA. 90,473 sqm.
(near Davao Holy Trinity)
Brgy. Road, BRGY. BAGO GALLERA
Min. Bid Price: P30,081,750

SAM_DAV258 IND'L LOT W/ HSE
LA. 18,823 sqm. FA. 122 sqm.
National Highway, Bago Aplaya, DUMOY, Toril
Min. Bid Price:P31,999,100

SAM_DAV261 VARIOUS COMM'L BLDG
LA. 6,760 sqm FA. 3,944 sqm.
(near Ecoland subd.)
QUIMPO BOULEVARD, Matina
Min. Bid Price: P60,000,000

SAM_DAV263 HOUSE & LOT
LA. 500 sqm.
Diamond St. NACILLA SUBD.
Brgy. Ma-a Talomo
Min. Bid Price:P1,062,500

SAM_DAV280 RSDL LOT
LA. 1,000 sqm.
BO. PAMPANGA
Min. Bid Price: P2,375,000

SAM_DAV281 2 STRY HSE & LOT
LA. 894 sqm. FA. 90 sqm.
(right behind Farmacia Sta. Ana, Matina)
STO. NINO COMMUNITY,
Brgy. Matina
Min. Bid Price: P2,207,000

SAM_DAV285 AGRI LOT
LA. 16,417 sqm.
Upper Piedad, TORIL DIST.
Min. Bid Price:P14,000,350

SAM_DAV286 RSDL LOT
LA. 2,562 sqm
(near Pilipinosas Subd.)
San Vicente, PANABO
Min. Bid Price: P640,000

SAM_DAV291 HOUSE & LOT
LA. 806 sqm. FA. 216 sqm.
Near Poblacion Brgy. Hall
ELPIDIO QUIRINO AVE.
Brgy.4 Pob. Dist.
Min. Bid Price: P8,060,000

SAM_DAV292 RSD' L LOT
LA. 4,000 sqm.
NAT'L HIGHWAY, Bago
Min. Bid Price: P11,775,056

SAM_DAV294 AGRI LOT
LA. 16,044 sqm.(near NIA Rd)
Brgy. Del Pilar, NEW CORELLA
Min. Bid Price:P1,943,330

SAM_DAV296 2-STRY HSE & LOT
LA. 600 sqm FA. 81sqm.
(near Alliance Learning Center)
Brgy. Road, Poblacion,
NEW CORELLA
Min. Bid Price: P450,000

SAM_DAV298 HOUSE & LOT
LA. 14,214 sqm. FA. 360 sqm.
(along MATI Nat'l Highway)
BRGY. BAGUMBAYAN, Lupon
Min. Bid Price:P1,819,246

SAM_DAV299 INDS'L LOT
LA. 94,687 sqm
Davao – Agusan Nat'l. Road
Brgy. Mahayag,
BUNAWAN DIST.
Min. Bid Price:P224,881,625

SAM_DAV301 AGRI LOT
LA. 74,632 sqm.
BRGY. POBLACION
Min. Bid Price:P31,718,600

SAM_DAV307 AGRI LOTS
LA. 477,481sqm.
BO. MATINA PANGI
Min. Bid Price: P 179,055,375

SAM_DAV465 RSDL TOWNHSE
LA 280 sqm.
GREEN HTS. GARDEN VILL.
BUHANGIN (near Club House)
Min. Bid Price: P4,760,000

GENERAL SANTOS
Text 09267666746

SAM_GSC314 COMM'L LOT W/ IMPROVEMENT
LA 7,501 sqm FA 4,697 sqm
(BESIDE China Bank)
SANTIAGO BOULEVARD,
Barrio Lagao
Min. Bid Price:P96,759,750

SAM_GSC316 AGRI LOT
LA 18,369 sqm
(Near Tinagacan Proposed Market Site)
BARRIO TINAGCAN
Min. Bid Price:P2,351,044

SAM_GSC318 RSDL LOT
LA 1,470 sqm.(w/n Roca Subd.)
BRGY. APUPONG
Min. Bid Price:P624,750

SAM_GSC320 IND'L LOT
LA 30,997 sqm.
(near former MSU Rd)
BARRIO TAMBLER
Min. Bid Price: P9,918,245

SAM_GSC321 HOUSE & LOT
LA 1,034 sqm. FA 246 sqm.
(Near Cambridge Hotel and Restaurant)
MANANSALA SUBD..,
Brgy. San Isidro
Min. Bid Price:P3,241,828

SAM_GSC322 RSD'L LOT
LA. 360 sqm.
(back of Horizin Tin Can)
DON GABRIEL SUBD.
Bo. of Tambler
Min. Bid Price: P306,000

SAM_GSC326 IND'L LOT
LA. 10,304 sqm.,
BO. OF TAMBLER (MCU Rd.)
Min. Bid Price:P 2,189,600

SAM_GSC331 RSDL LOT
LA 5,000 sqm
(near Monsanto Hybrid Farm)
Brgy. Rd. Purok 18,LAGAO
Min. Bid Price:P4,250,000

SAM_GSC332 HOUSE & LOT
LA 598 sqm FA 103 sqm
Bluefin cor. Goldfish Sts.
ESPINA SUBD.
Purok Mauswagon,
Brgy. Labangal (near SSS)
Min. Bid Price:P849,086

SAM_GSC334 RSDL LOT
LA 749 sqm
(near Pacheco Subd.)
AQUINO SUBD., Purok Kaunlaran, Brgy. San Isidro
Min. Bid Price:P636,650

SAM_GSC336 RSDL LOT W/ IMPROVEMENT
LA 603 sqm FA 78 sqm
Pili Corner J.P. LAUREL ST.
Min. Bid Price:P1,537,650

SAM_GSC339 COMM'L LOT
LA 778 sqm.
(Fronting former Bayfront Noodle House)
P. Acharon Blvd. cor. Salazar & Veterans Sts., BRGY. DADIANGAS SOUTH,
Min. Bid Price:P11,242,100

SAM_GSC341 COMM'L LOT
LA 1,109 sqm
CALUMPANG AVE., Calumpang
Min. Bid Price:P4,092,559

SAM_GSC343 AGRI LOT
LA 20,293 sqm.
Packing One, SLAUGHTER HOUSE RD.
Min. Bid Price:P1,638,660

SAM_GSC344 RSDL LOT
LA 694 sqm
(near Gen.San Cockpit Arena)
National Highway,
BO. OF APUPONG
Min. Bid Price:P616,446

SAM_GSC345 HOUSE & LOT
LA 389 sqm FA 161 sqm
(near Notre Dame College)
Balagtas St., BO. DADIANGAS
Min. Bid Price:P1,098,169

SAM_GSC346 HOUSE & LOT
LA. 425 sqm.
Dalandan St.,
w/n DADIANGAS HTS.
Min. Bid Price: P707,783

SAM_GSC348 HOUSE & LOT
LA 451 sqm FA 248 sqm
(meters away from Desmark Motors) ROXAS ST.(near SSS)
Min. Bid Price: P6,926,805

SAM_GSC350 RSDL LOT W/ IMPROVEMENT
LA 3,303 sqm FA.830 sqm.
(near Medoz Pension Jazz House)
MORALES SUBD., Bo. Lagao
Min. Bid Price:P3,931,576

SAM_GSC351 HOUSE & LOT
LA 645 sqm FA 194 sqm
ROSAS ST.
Min. Bid Price:P2,630,431

SAM_GSC352 HOUSE & LOT
LA 476 sqm FA 122 sqm
(near Alphine Subd.)
AVILA SUBD. Brgy. San Isidro, Lagao
Min. Bid Price:P 609,231

SAM_GSC353 AGRI LOT
LA 76,229 sqm
(Near St. Peter Chapel)
Lanton. BO. OF SINAWAL
Min. Bid Price: P9,756,530

SAM_GSC355 INDS'L LOT
LA 19,663 sqm.
(near MGTK Fishing Industry)
BO. OF TAMBLER
Min. Bid Price:P7,186,827

SAM_GSC356 HOUSE & LOT
LA.598 sqm FA 220 sqm.
(near Eduard Cocolumber)
Purok San Vicente ESPINA,
Min. Bid Price:P765,379

SAM_GSC358 IND'L LOT
LA 20,000 sqm.
BO. OF TAMBLER
Min. Bid Price:P4,250,000

SAM_GSC359 RSD'L LOT
LA 400 sqm
(Near Holy Cross Parish)
CATAPANG HTS. SUBD.
Brgy. Calumpang
Min. Bid Price:P340,000

SAM_GSC361 HOUSE & LOT
LA 302 sqm FA 70 sqm.
Mangustan St., BRGY. DADIANGAS NORTH,
Min. Bid Price: P1,159,587

SAM_GSC366 RSDL APRTMENT
LA 199 sqm FA 123 sqm
PUROK BAGONG SILANG
Labangal
Min. Bid Price: P422,875

SAM_GSC367 WHOLE SUBD. W/O DEVELOPMENT
L.A. 170,716 sqm.
SERRAMAR EXEC. HOMES,
Conel Rd., Lagao
(near w/n Brgy. Makar)
Min. Bid Price: P68,754,754

SAM_GSC370 HOUSE & LOT
LA 604 sqm FA 272 sqm
Mangustan Street,
BRGY. DADIANGAS NORTH
Min. Bid Price: P1,788,128

SAM_GSC373 AGRI LOT
LA 11,694 sqm.
(Near Shrineville Subd)
Farm Road, BRGY. LAGAO
Min. Bid Price:P2,981,970

SAM_GSC466 IND'L LOT
LA. 16,248 sqm.
NAT'L HIGHWAY CALUMPANG,
Brgy. Makar
Min. Bid Price: P41,883,560

SAM_GSC467 IND'L LOT
LA. 13,544 sqm.
Makar-Siguil Rd.,
New Bohol, CALUMPANG
Min. Bid Price: P18,650,088

SAM_GSC468 COMM'L LOT
LA. 206,346 sqm.
Bo. Lamcanal, MALANDAG
Min. Bid Price: P7,639,163

KIDAPAWAN
Text 09157470332

SAM_KID374 AGRI LOT
LA 12,474 sqm
BRGY. PACO Kidapawan
Min. Bid Price: P1,060,290

MISAMIS
Text 09217388885

SAM_ MIS469 HOUSE & LOT
LA 11,378 sqm FA 238 sqm
ALUBIJID, Misamis Oriental
Min. Bid Price: P1,934,260

NORTH COTOBATO
Text 09157470332

SAM_NCT376 AGRI LOT
LA 49, 538 sqm
National Rd., Brgy. Manubuan, MATALAM
Min. Bid Price:P3,633,750

SAM_NCT377 RSDL LOT W/ PIGGERY
LA 15,000 sqm FA 1,320 sqm
Brgy. Katidtuan, KABABACAN
Min. Bid Price: 2,550,000

SOUTH COTABATO
Text 09157470332

SAM_SCT378 INDS'L LOT W/ MOTORPOOL
LA 3,000 sqm FA 330 sqm
LIGTAS VILLAGE, Cannery Rd., Polomok
(near Tropiland Pawnshop)
Min. Bid Price: P2,550,000

SAM_SCT380 RSD'L LOT
LA 1,064 sqm
(near Sto.Nino Parish)
M. ROXAS BLVD. EXT.,
Poblacion, Sto. Niño
Min. Bid Price:P904,400

SAM_SCT381 AGRI LOT
LA 8, 640 sqm
STO. NINO
Min. Bid Price: P1,468,800

SAM_SCT382 RSD'L LOT
LA 13, 477 sqm
(near Sto. Nino Nat'l Town Hall) POB. STO. NINO
Min. Bid Price: P5,727,725

SAM_SCT383 HOUSE & LOT
LA 1,651 sqm FA 278 sqm
Bonifacio St., POB. NORALA
Min. Bid Price: P776,811

SAM_SCT384 HOUSE & LOT
LA 22, 687 sqm FA 176 sqm
(near Bonzo Ricemill)
Bo. Simsiman, POBLACION NORALA
Min. Bid Price: P9,641,975

SAM_SCT385 HOUSE & LOT
LA 340 sqm FA 145 sqm
POBLACION NORALA
Min. Bid Price: P 319,946

SAM_SCT386 RSDL LOT W/ WAREHOUSE
LA 2, 581 sqm
POBLACION STO. NINO
Min. Bid Price: 2,193,850

SAM_ SCT387 HOUSE & LOT
LA 798 sqm
Rosal St. Brgy. POB. SURALLAH
Min. Bid Price: P 789,697

SAM_SCT470 RSD'L LOT
Barrio 8, KORONADAL

Lot Area		Min. Bid Price
2,128 sqm.	P	904,400
2,701 sqm.	P	1,377,425

SAM_SCT472 HOUSE & LOT
LA 409 sqm FA 101 sqm
(near Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital) H. DEPITA SUBD.,
Koronadal
Min. Bid Price: P521,475

SAM_SCT473 RSD'L LOT
LA 3, 241 sqm
Barrio 8, KORONADAL
Min. Bid Price:P1,377,425

SAM_SCT474 HOUSE & LOT
LA. 1,073 sqm. FA. 170 sqm.
PUROK SAMPAGUITA
Pob. Sto. Nino
Min. Bid Price: P4,560,250

SULTAN KUDARAT
Text 09157470332

SAM_SUL397 RSDL LOT
LA 2, 642 sqm.
(near Metrobank)
BO. DANSULI, Isulan
Min. Bid Price: P2,245,700

SAM_SUL399 HOUSE & LOT
LA 1,000 sqm. FA 107 sqm
Buencamino cor. Tiongco Sts.
BO. KALWAG 1, Isulan
Min. Bid Price: P1,279,897

SAM_SUL400 2-STRY COMM'L BLDG.
LA 750 sqm FA 533 sqm
QUIRINO AVE..,Poblacion,
Tacurong City
Min. Bid Price:P4,799,615

SAM_SUL401 HOUSE & LOT
Molave cor. Flores Sts.
(near Esperanza Mun. High Sch.)

Lot Area	Flr Area	Min Bid Price
423sqm	370sqm	P1,797,750
405sqm	163sqm	P3,442,500

SAM_SUL402 AGRI LOT
LA 10,161 sqm (infront of Ezperanza High Schl.)
Molave Ext., POBLACION,
Esperanza
Min. Bid Price:P1,300,504

SAM_SUL403 RSDL BLDG
LA 607 sqm FA 114 sqm
Dona Sts. POB. ESPERANZA
Min. Bid Price:P948,404

SAM_SUL406 HOUSE & LOT
LA 494 sqm FA 148 sqm
(near RCBC Isulan)
Along Municipal Rd.,
KALAWAG III, Isulan,
Min. Bid Price: P4,199,000

TAGUM
Text 09267666746

SAM_TGM411 AGRI LOT
LA 4, 328 sqm (Near Univ. of Southeastern Phil.)
Brgy..Apokon, PUROK V
Min. Bid Price:P1,839,400

SAM_ TGM415 INDS'L LOT
LA 6,000 sqm (Near San Vicente Ferrer Chapel)
APOKON
Min. Bid Price:P3,876,00

SAM_TGM423 RSD'L BLDG.
LA 225 sqm FA 172 sqm
(Near Queen of Apostle Seminary)
Prk. Sampaguita Rd. 1,
MAGUGPO WEST
Min. Bid Price:P478,125

SAM_TGM428 AGRI RICEMILL
LA 1, 757 sqm.
PUROK PAG-ASA,
Pagsabangan,
Min. Bid Price:P1,493,450

SAM_TGM431 AGRI RAW LAND
LA 23, 441 sqm.
(near UMTagum Coll.)
VISAYAN VILLAGE
Min. Bid Price:P6,973,698

SAM_ TGM436 HOUSE & LOT
LA 1,000 sqm
MEL VILLAGE,
Brgy. Visayan Village
Min. Bid Price:P2,287,177

SAM_TGM437 COMM'L LOT
Quirante II St. PRK.
LAPU-LAPU, Magugpo
(near JVC,back of JS Galsano)

Lot Area		Min. Bid Price
1,646 sqm.	P	6,995,500
3,001 sqm.	P	25,508,500

SAM_TGM439 RSDL LOT
LA 450 sqm
(Near Methodist Church)
PAGSABANGAN
Min. Bid Price: P573,750

SAM_TGM440 RSD'L LOT
LA 3,000 sqm
(New Life Ministryes Chapel)
PUROK ORANGE VALLEY,
Magugpo South,
Min. Bid Price: P6,375,000

SAM_TGM449 RSD'L LOT
LA 556 sqm. (meters away from Dalisay Gante Rd.)
PUROK VIPATIL
Min. Bid Price:P378,080

SAM_TGM450 RESIDENTIAL / COMMERCIAL BLDG
LA 379 sqm FA 514 sqm
SOBRECAREY ST.
Min. Bid Price:P4,850,811

SAM_TGM455 HOUSE & LOT
LA 7, 456 sqm FA 106 sqm
(near YBC Store)
DOMINGO SUBD., Magugpo Poblacion,
Min. Bid Price: P6,337,600

SAM_TGM456 AGRI LOT
LA 3, 827 sqm
(Near Nichols Homes Subd.)
Purok Bull, VISAYAN VILL.
Min. Bid Price: P1,301,180

SAM_TGM460 RSDL LOT
LA 477 sqm.
(near DANECO Office)
Briz District, MAGUGPO EAST,
Min. Bid Price:P1,013,625

SAM_TGM463 RSD'L LOT
LA 300 sqm.
(near Magsanoc Vill.)
PUROK ABACA, Brgy. Mankilam
Min. Bid Price:P382,500

SAM_TGM464 RSD'L LOT
LA 250 sqm.
(Near Phil. Benovolent Missionary)
SENAGOTE VILL., Magugpo East
Min. Bid Price:P531,250

SAM_TGM470 COMM'L BLDG
LA 18, 830 sqm FA 2, 117 sqm
(near First Consolidated Bank)
PAGSABANGAN RD.,
Brgy. Mankilam
Min. Bid Price: P21,479,366

SAM_TGM476 HOUSE & LOT
LA. 400 sqm. FA. 315 sqm.
(near Visayan Elem. Sch.)
Purok Palmera, VISAYAN VILL.
Min. Bid Price:P1,213,343

SAM_TGM477 HOUSE & LOT
Purok Palmera,
VISAYAN VILLAGE
(near Visayan Elem. Sch.)

Lot Area	Flr Area	Min. Bid Price
750sqm	400sqm	P 1,593,750
1,066sqm	192sqm	P 2,265,250
1,406sqm	400sqm	P 2,987,750

SAM_TGM481 RSD'L LOT
VISAYAN VILLAGE
(near Visayan Elem. Sch.)

Lot Area		Min. Bid Price
4,500 sqm	P	9,562,500
1,236 sqm.	P	2,626,500
1,512 sqm.	P	3,213,000
1,648sqm.	P	3,502,000
2,338 sqm.	P.	4,968,250
7,014sqm.	P	5,961,900

SAM_TGM482 AGRI LOT
LA 12, 580 sqm.
(near Clausio Inse,Sicat Cockpit Arena) BRGY. CANOCOTAN
Min. Bid Price:P2,138,600

SAM_TGM484 RSD'L LOT
LA 400 sqm (meters away from Christ the King Chapel)
Suaybaguio Road,
BRGY. LA FORTUNA,
Min. Bid Price:P409,567

SAM_TGM492 RSDL LOT
LA 2, 119 sqm.
Purok Malinawon,
MAGUGPO EAST,
Min. Bid Price: P4,502,875

SAM_TGM493 AGRI LOT
LA. 62,900 sqm.
BRGY. CANOCOTAN, San Isidro
(near Sicat Cockpit Arena)
Min. Bid Price:P21,386,000

SAM_TGM495 12 RSD'L LOTS
LA 15,610 sqm
Purok Cacao,
VISAYAN VILLAGE
Min. Bid Price: P6,634,250

SAM_TGM497 RSDL LOT W/ IMPROVEMENT
LA 24, 022 sqm FA 1, 062 sqm.
Tagum-Kapalong, Provincial Rd.,
BRGY. PAGSABANGAN
Min. Bid Price: P20,418,700

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Narra Nickel bags 4 supply deals

Long-term contracts eyed

By Ronnel W. Domingo

CANADIAN MINING FIRM MBMI Resources Inc. said its Philippine unit, Narra Nickel, has firmed up four supply deals with buyers from China, Australia and Japan for ores coming from its Alpha project in Palawan.

The announcement follows a statement in June on the start of shipments to buyers in South Korea and China.

Michael T. Manson, MBMI president and director, said in a statement posted on the firm's website that the sales agreements covered supplies of materials with nickel content ranging from 1.5 percent to 2.3 percent.

Manson said Sinosteel Raw Materials Co., a unit of one of the largest steel companies in China, agreed to buy a shipment of between 35,000 and 40,000 dry metric tons of ore with at least 1.8 percent nickel and 17 percent iron content.

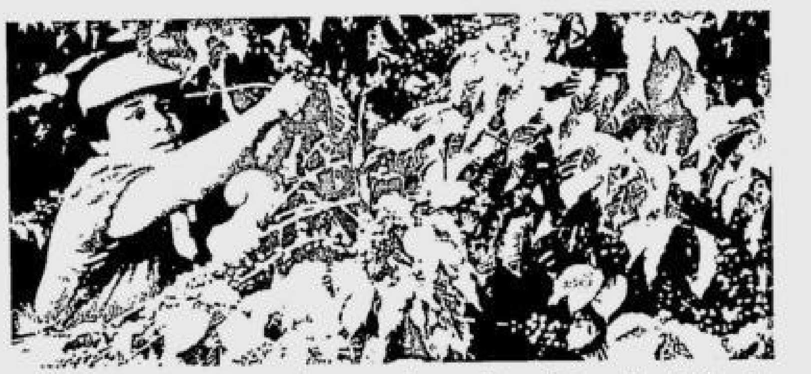
A second deal is struck with BHP's QNI group for the same volume but with grades of at least 1.6 percent nickel and 20 percent iron, to be used in the latter's plant in Queensland, Australia.

A third contract was with Hubei Jin Hui of China for the same volume but with grades of more than 1.7 percent nickel and more than 17 percent iron.

The fourth deal was with Nippon Yakin Kogyo Co. Ltd. through Mitsui & Co. Ltd. of Japan for 6,000 to 8,000 DMT of ore with more than 2.3 percent nickel and less than 12 percent iron.

Manson said the supply for Sinosteel Raw Materials was being prepared for shipment and that the buyer was securing the carrying vessel.

Also, representatives of Nippon Yakin and Mitsui have visited Palawan and are evaluating the samples of materials being prepared for shipment in the stockpile area.



THE SAI platform aims to improve the quality, safety and nutritional value of agricultural products.

Sustainable agriculture programs gain ground

THE PROMOTION OF SUSTAINABLE Agriculture Initiative (SAI) by leading food and beverage gains momentum as more companies adopt the system in their production processes.

In a follow-up meeting to last year's First Sustainable Agriculture Initiative (SAI) Platform-Philippine Convention, officials of Delfi Foods Inc., Golden Arches Development Corp., Unilever Phils. and Universal Robina Corp. reported they were now implementing SAI-related programs.

Nestlé Philippines Inc. has its Nestlé Experimental and Demonstration Farm, Unilever has its Clean Water campaign, and Coca-Cola, its PET (Polyethylene Terephthalate, a recyclable material) bottle program.

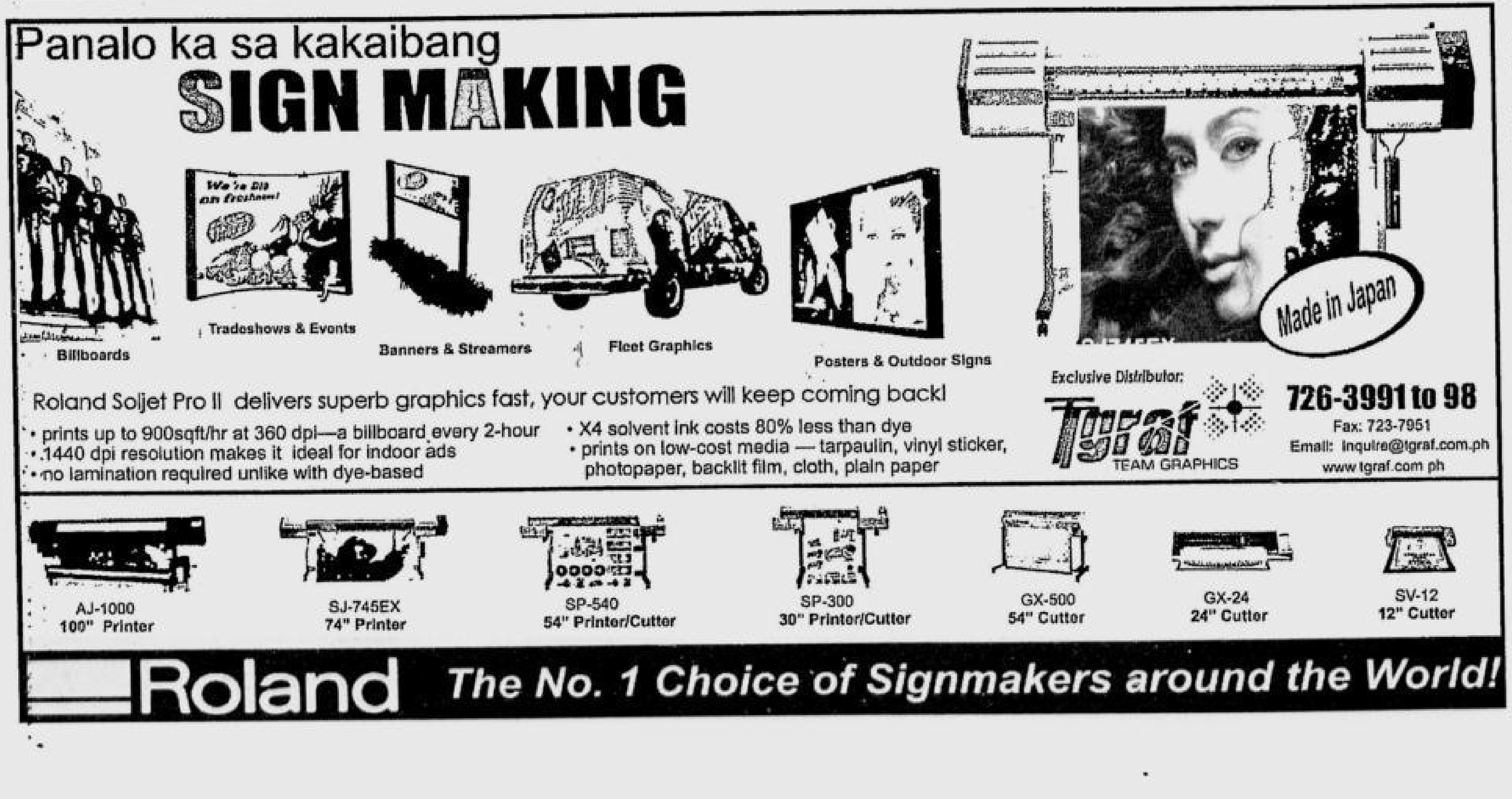
During the meeting, participants agreed to implement awareness program among their respective employees and partner companies.

The campaign will include the compilation for distribution of the best practices and success stories of the participating companies.

In the meantime, the group plans to gather at least 15 more companies to put SAI objectives into practice. Participants agreed to bring representatives from three of their partner companies in their meeting with the Department of Agriculture in November with an end in view of encouraging them to join the SAI's cause.

SAI is a groundbreaking platform created by food industry giants Nestlé, Danone and Unilever to actively support and promote sustainable agriculture. It encompasses social, environmental and economic dimensions that will have impact on the people's lives.

The SAI platform aims to improve the quality, safety and nutritional value of agricultural products through concrete ways of increasing the products' nutritional content and reducing the risks of harmful residues. It also addresses relevant issues such as improving the farmers' productivity and income through livelihood programs, and conservation of soil, water and power.



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DA seeks help of LGUs

By Amy R. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE IS seeking the help of other agencies and local government units in efforts to sustain a rosy farm growth in 2008.

Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap said that climate change and possible supply shortfalls might jack up prices of rice and corn next year.

Yap would be meeting with LGUs and other farm sector stakeholders to craft intervention measures to prevent sharp increases in the prices of these commodities.

He said these measures were similar to those implemented in recent months to offset crop production losses in several Luzon provinces buffeted by the dry spell.

Despite the prolonged dry spell in the middle of the year, Philippine agriculture managed to grow 4.3 percent in the first nine months, owing in part to the quick turnaround program.

Such "timely measures" were meant to boost yields in the nonaffected farms of the Visayas and Mindanao and contain the adverse impact of the prolonged dryspell, Yap said.

For the rest of the year until 2008, the DA said it would continue implementing "interventions" such as the provision of rice seeds to farmers.

The DA is also spearheading an information campaign on the latest rice production technologies and is coordinating with local governments and the the private sector in

DA SEEKS/ B8

Tax leaks cost gov't ₱107B in '06

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT, STILL hard-pressed in its effort to wipe out the budget deficit, lost close to P107 billion in potential revenues in 2006 alone due to income tax leakages.

This was according to the research and information office of the Department of Finance, which estimated that the government collected only P321.21 billion last year out of a potential income tax take of P428.19 billion.

The potential income tax collection was based on the number of supposed taxpayers and their estimated income.

BIR's tax collection woes said to be far from being resolved

Of the total income tax collection last year, those remitted by employed individuals amounted to P105.887 billion. This marked an P11.54-billion shortfall from the potential collection of P117.43 billion.

Income tax collected from self-employed individuals reached P19.72 billion—lower by P13.31 billion from the potential collection of P33.03 billion.

The largest source of income tax leakages was the corporate taxpayers sector, which remitted P195.6 billion in income tax, or P81.96-billion short of the potential P277.56 billion.

According to finance officials, the huge leakages in tax collection is proof that there is still a large room for improvement in the way the Bureau of Internal Revenue has been collecting taxes. They pointed out the weaknesses of the BIR and dishonesty of taxpayers.

The BIR has since started to update its taxpayers' database and stepped up its tax audits.

The recently implemented Tax Amnesty law requires delinquent taxpayers to come forward in order to clean their statements of assets, liabilities and net worth (SALNs). The objective is to help the BIR improve its taxpayers' database by including formerly unregistered income earners.

With the amnesty set to lapse on March 5 next year, those who qualify for the amnesty will be immune from prosecution in relation to their tax delinquency.

The BIR's tax collection woes is far from being resolved, as shortfalls are still expected this year.

Galoc fuels Otto's working capital

By Abigail L. Ho

AUSTRALIA'S OTTO ENERGY LTD. HOPES to earn net revenues of between $30 million and $45 million from the Galoc oil field in 2008—enough to bolster its working capital requirements in the next few years.

Otto chief executive Alex Parks said the company's "conservative" estimate of its share from the Galoc proceeds in 2008 would be around $30 million, in line with the research assumptions of financial services firm Euroz.

This figure was based on an average oil price of around $60 a barrel, he said.

"On current oil prices, Otto's net revenue in 2008 [from the Galoc proceeds alone] could be as much as $45 million," Parks said. "In addition, the funds from the cash bonds will also be released during this period, giving us up to $60 million in working capital."

The Otto official also said that the firm could expect to generate similar revenue in 2009.

In 2010, "we expect revenues to drop off a little, unless a further development well is added to the field," Parks added. "So we have a reasonable cash flow profile going forward.

He also said that the company's cash flow and future working capital requirements would be supplemented by proceeds from expected gas production in Turkey starting late 2008 or early 2009, and possible production from the Calauit oil field in the Northwest Palawan Basin in 2009.

Otto is expected to join the list of stakeholders in Service Contract 14C, which covers the Galoc petroleum field, by Dec. 14 when it completes its acquisition of Team Oil Ltd. and Cape Energy Philippines SA.

Cape Philippines and Team Oil each owned 15.69 percent of SC 14C operator Galoc Production Co. (GPC), with a subsidiary of the Vitol Group owning the remaining 68.62 percent.

The shares of Cape Philippines and Team Oil combined would effectively give Otto an 18.28-percent share in the service contract.

GPC owns 58.29 percent of SC 14C. Australian firm Nido Petroleum Ltd. is the second biggest shareholder with a 22.28-percent stake.

Payment for the SC 14C stake will come from a two-tranche shares placement worth A$67.8 million (US$61.2 million).

Net 'hot money' . . .

From page B1

ernment securities, primarily FXTNs, accounted for $2.2 billion or 16 percent of the total investment inflows while money market instruments and peso bank deposits had a combined share of only about 1 percent.

The United States, the United Kingdom and Singapore were the top countries of origin of the investment funds during the period. The resurgence of hot money supported the rise in the country's balance of payments to record highs this year.

On Friday, the BSP reported that the country's BOP surplus climbed to $7.85 billion in the first 10 months, more than double the $3.8-billion windfall in the same period last year and exceeding the $6.3-billion surplus target for the full year. The BOP surplus hit $1.19 billion for the month of October alone, reversing the $95-million deficit in September.

The BOP measures the foreign exchange transactions between the domestic economy and the rest of the world. Any transaction which gives rise to a payment by a Philippine resident like importation or debt servicing is a deficit item in the BOP while any which gives rise to a receipt like portfolio investment, borrowing, exporting or overseas Filipino worker remittance is a surplus item.

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Philamlife Dollar Bond Fund	1.3797	1.3777
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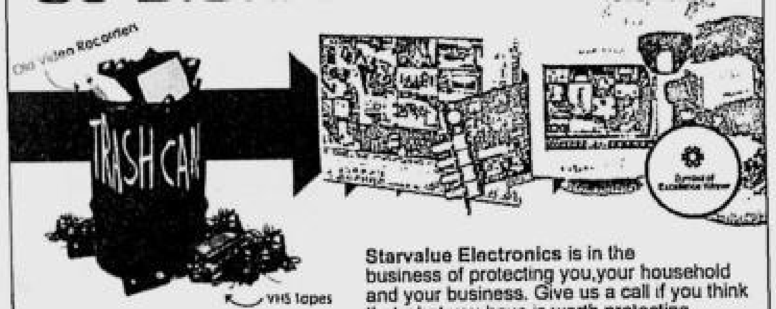

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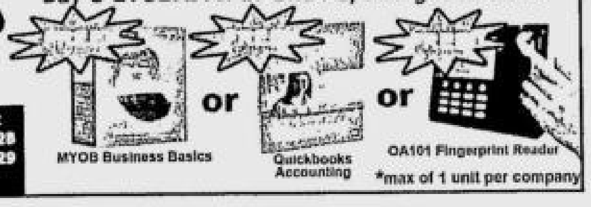

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NATIONLINK EMPOWERS INTEGRATED ONLINE NETWORK FOR A UNITED RURAL BANK INDUSTRY

A living miracle is happening in the countryside-rural banks across the country are working together to expand the NATIONLINK Network, the official ATM/POS network of the industry.

Online since May 2006 after 10 years of development, NATIONLINK ATMs are now installed in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. Through its partnership with Bancnet, NATIONLINK empowers the 700-strong rural banks, with more than 2,000 points of presence across the country, to offer modern mainstream banking and payment services.

Qualified member rural banks of NATIONLINK-Bancnet can accept ATM transactions from Bancnet, Megalink, Expressnet and NATIONLINK, as well as issue ATM cards. The network's expansion is spurring economic development in the countryside. Moreover, it's the first time, in more than 50 years of rural banking history, that rural banks all over the country are united to build a modern financial network that will complement the commercial and thrift banks in nation building.

Modern Money Remittance

A recent USAID-sponsored study conducted by Ateneo's Economic Policy Reform and Advocacy (EPRA) entitled "Rural Banks and Remittances" confirms the strategic role of the NATIONLINK Network in the future of foreign money remittance. In particular, it will improve the delivery of the multi-billion dollar money remittances from overseas Filipino workers (OFWs).

The study concludes with policy recommendations, stating that several studies have advocated the "integration of rural banks to the mainstream banking system." It says: "A more important consideration is the inclusion of rural banks into the payment system in order for them to benefit from the efficient money transfer operations currently being experienced by the commercial and thrift banks. Collectively, rural banks create a large network of banks in the Philippines and put them at par with commercial banks. With the rural banks' advantage in their presence in low-level municipalities where commercial bank branches are absent, rural banks would add value to commercial banks as partners in remittances."

Mobilizing Savings and Economic Growth

Rural banks are used as pay-out stations of big remittance companies and commercial banks. NATIONLINK Network expands their role by enabling rural banks to participate in the Inter-Bank Fund Transfer (IBFT) mechanisms of the major networks and of NATIONLINK itself. Thus, these banks can now electronically receive funds for crediting to the savings account or ATM card account of their customers/beneficiaries. This effectively builds up the deposit base of the rural banking system and helps fund the growth of the economy around the area where the particular rural bank operates.

Payment System for the Countryside

Imagine the transforming effect this will have in the lives and families of small and micro entrepreneurs. Customers from other towns or provinces can pay them faster. And they in turn can expedite their payments to suppliers in urban centers. These are among the empowering benefits that rural banks linked to the NATIONLINK Network can give their clients. NATIONLINK enables countryside enterprises to be part of the global e-commerce revolution.

A Unifying Network

While individually small, the united and integrated rural bank network empowered by NATIONLINK presents a potent force and financial capability equivalent to a 2,000- branch network bank.

Rural bankers are fully aware that only a united network can enable the industry to become a major contributor to nation building.

Poverty Eradication and Transformation

Economic growth is the single most significant factor contributing to poverty eradication and development. Like insufficient credit and liquidity, the lack of access to a payment network for the poor represents a significant obstacle to improving their standard of living. The NATIONLINK Network addresses this problem for the millions of poor in the rural Philippines by doing the following:

(i) simplify the disbursement and collection of micro-credit loans;

(ii) facilitate greater savings mobilization and improved cash management techniques; and

(iii) contribute to enhanced, overall systemic efficiency, thereby leading to positive knock-on effects throughout the local economy.

NATIONLINK Network's proponents have been inspired by the transformational impact of the extension of banking services to the poor. A fundamental predicate of the Network is the desire to demonstrate the love of Jesus Christ through economic development, the improvement in living standards resulting from better health, education and personal security, and the strengthening of individuals' hope in the future. The Network complements micro-lending and micro-insurance operations and aims to accentuate how these can transform people's lives.

An Invitation for Direct Action

Modern banking services, like ATMs, are no longer a luxury today. Rural bank customers expect these services. The private and public sector workers, farmers and fisher folk, SMEs, OFW beneficiaries, micro-entrepreneurs, and the poor and marginalized in the countryside deserve no less than the same modern banking services that we take for granted in urban centers.

Jess dela Cruz, founder and lead advocate of NATIONLINK, invites all rural bankers to join this living miracle in the countryside. "Joining NATIONLINK brings back the joy, the meaning and the passion of rural banking," he says.

Moreover, dela Cruz adds: "Our ATM solution package pricing and terms respect the rural banker's intelligence, sound judgment and his commitment to servicing the bank's customers first and foremost. We do not want the rural banker to make the mistake of thinking that such a meaningful endeavor that gives great value and benefits is free-as there is no such thing as a free lunch. Our philanthropic contribution to the endeavor is to subsidize part of the cost of the solution package to make it affordable to rural banks and put up the major investments in developing the network switching systems and value creating applications."

The Return on Investments (ROI) in NATIONLINK comes in the form of more deposits (which means more funds for loans), fee income from transactions, efficient and less costly operations, and better service. In addition, being part of a network adds to the bank's prestige and gives customers the convenience of transacting with a modern and progressive bank. Aside from having the ability to offer innovative services, the bank can also alleviate poverty more and help the least of our brothers and sisters in its community.

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Metrobank eyes amnesty for P1-B DST liability

BIR firm on pursuing 'strong' cases vs delinquent banks

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By Michelle V. Remo

METROBANK, THE COUNTRY'S largest bank in terms assets, has applied for tax amnesty over an estimated P1 billion in unpaid documentary stamp taxes since the 1990s.

The documentary stamps were supposed to be paid on the special savings accounts offered by the bank to its clients.

An official familiar with the issue revealed that Metrobank had sought the withdrawal of its case against the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR), which was lodged with the Court of Tax Appeals in the light of its amnesty application.

Under the program, which runs from Sept. 6, 2007 to Mar. 5, 2008, individuals and companies that have unpaid taxes for 2005 and prior years may avail themselves of the amnesty.

To do so, applicants are asked to pay a relatively small tax amnesty fee to receive, in return, immunity from prosecution and a clean financial slate.

Metrobank's amnesty application was filed despite BIR pronouncements that it would not drop cases against banks that owe the government billions of pesos in unpaid documentary stamp taxes, even if they apply for the amnesty.

There are several other banks that have yet to settle their alleged documentary stamp tax liabilities with the BIR. Certain banks have paid their tax liabilities prior to the passage of the Tax Amnesty Law.

The dispute stems from the creation of special savings deposits in the 1990s, which banks for clients who sought higher yields, coupled with the ability to withdraw from their accounts at will.

Under the National Internal Revenue Code, time deposit accounts, which have higher interest rates, are subject to documentary stamp taxes, while ordinary savings accounts are not. Special savings accounts have the features of both ordinary and time deposit accounts.

Revenue Commissioner Lilian Hefti earlier said it was in the government's best interest to pursue the cases, as it needs additional revenues to plug this year's budget deficit.

The large foregone revenues expected from the Tax Amnesty Law was the reason the BIR insisted on disqualifying delinquent taxpayers who were already charged in court. The BIR hoped that only the most elusive tax evaders, and those that have yet to be charged, would be eligible for amnesty.

The final version of the law, however, was silent on the BIR's proposal.

Nontheless, Hefti said the BIR would not drop the documentary stamp tax-related cases. She said her office would not voluntarily withdraw the charges, and would instead let the courts decide on the matter.

DA assures steady prices, supply of food for holidays

By Amy R. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE has assured consumers that the supply and prices of chicken, fish, vegetables and pork would remain stable throughout the holidays in Metro Manila markets.

According to Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap, farm growers and suppliers have informed the DA that the supply of these basic commodities are sufficient to meet rising consumer demand during the Christmas season.

"The challenge for us is to keep on pumping these food products into the nine *bagsakan* centers that we have already opened and the 21 barangay food terminals to ensure supply," Yap said.

Yap said that *tilapia* is expected to maintain its price of P70 to P80 a kilo, while pork will remain at P140 to P145 a kilo during the holidays.

The cost of chicken, which is now at P120 a kilo, could still decline to P115, he added.

The agriculture secretary added that the poultry industry has already stocked an additional 7 million kilos of chicken imports to meet the 43 million-kilo demand for this commodity in the next two weeks of November and the entire month of December.

"We do not see any reason why prices of chicken would spike given an additional 7 million kilos of buffer stock," Yap added.

Yap also said that because of the good weather and the harvests from alternative production sites, the DA sees no problem in the supply of carrots, tomatoes, *pechay* and other vegetables this season.

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Foreign investments to boost GSIS finances

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE STATE-OWNED GOVERNment Service Insurance System's capacity to meet future obligation to members would be boosted by its $1-billion global investment plan (GIP), its chief said on Friday.

GSIS president Winston Garcia said that the overseas investment plan, which is supported by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, would allow the pension fund to maximize its excess resources.

"The GSIS has a continuing obligation to see to it that our assets will not only perpetually grow, but will be sufficient to match the contingent and future liabilities of the GSIS to its members. The GIP is one the ways of fulfilling this obligation," Garcia said.

In a recent radio interview, BSP Deputy Governor Guinigundo said the GSIS's move to explore investment opportunities abroad through the GIP would mean higher returns for the contributions of its members.

The BSP official likewise stressed that the "absorptive capacity" of the country was too limited to take advantage of the billions of dollars in investible funds of the GSIS and the Social Security System.

"These investible funds can be used to build concrete real sector infrastructure and finance other economic activities if we expand our absorptive capacity. But if we have nowhere to place these funds right now, these funds will only add to our current money supply. We can't use them for credit requirement nor to build our infrastructure," Guinigundo said.

"Now that we're still [experiencing excessive] dollar inflows, it will also be good if both GSIS and SSS can explore investment opportunities abroad," he said.

The GSIS has earlier awarded to ING Investment Management and Credit Agricole Asset Management (Singapore) Ltd. the mandates for its GIP. The pension fund has set a minimum annual return requirement of 8 percent, net of fees, and a volatility ceiling of 7 percent for the portfolio.

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Bid documents will be issued after passing the eligibility to bid and upon payment of Seven Thousand Pesos (Php7,000.00) non-refundable before the pre-bid conference. Detailed estimate, specification of materials and staking sheet for the above project is included in the pruchased bid document.

Acceptance of Letter of Intent	Nov. 20-23, 2007
Receipt of Eligibility requirement	Nov. 23-26, 2007
Issuance of Notice of Eligibility to bid	Nov. 26-29, 2007
Pre-bid Conference	Nov. 29, 2007 @ 10:00 a.m.
Opening of Bids	Dec. 18, 2007 @ 2:00 p.m.

Only qualified bidders who passed the pre-qualification screening will be allowed to participate in the bidding. Bid proposals must be accompanied by Bid Security equivalent to 5% of the total bid price in an acceptable form.

All bidders are required to conduct on site inspection of the 10 barangays prior to the opening of bids.

The PBAC will use non-discretionary pass/fail criteria in the Eligibility check and Screening as well as preliminary examination of bids. The PBAC will conduct post-qualification of the lowest bid.

NORSAMELCO hereby reserves the right to reject any or all bids without disclosing any reason, to waive/put aside any minor defects or infirmities therein or to accept such bid as may be considered most advantageous and responsive to the NORSAMELCO.

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(PDI - Nov. 18 & 19, 2007)

Bank adopts new SME lending approach

Lending to small business short of requirement

By Doris C. Dumlao

BANK LENDING TO SMALL AND medium enterprises has been falling short by P67 billion to P180 billion of the sector's yearly funding requirement despite government intervention, an International Finance Corp. study estimated.

This has prompted IFC, the World Bank group's private sector arm, to tie up with a leading local microfinance institution, CARD Bank, to introduce an SME banking model that departs from the traditional lending approach, hoping that this model would eventually be embraced by the banking system.

The partnership will be focused on capacity-building and on helping CARD Bank cater to the needs of its clients.

"Through IFC's advisory services, we hope to achieve our transition from a microfinance institution into being a key provider of financing to small and medium enterprises," CARD Bank chair Aristotle Alip said.

The program focuses on SME banking and stresses the importance for banks to offer and cross-sell multiple products, focus on strong marketing, and adopt segmentation and product development capacity. It also emphasizes the importance of a strong management information system that can support credit scoring and credit relations management.

Although the new SME banking model will be pilot-tested with CARD Bank, IFC is keen on propagating the new approach to other microfinance lenders or even to big commercial banks that are willing to diversify their portfolio and make inroads into the middle market.

"There is a huge potential for commercial banks to 'downscale' and rural and thrift banks to 'upscale' to provide credit to small and medium businesses wanting to borrow medium sized loans," IFC advisory services coordinator Euan Marshall said.

"IFC seeks to work with both commercial and rural banks to achieve this and thus help plus the 'missing middle' in SME financing," he added.

The study commissioned by IFC on SME financing in the Philippines showed that among the factors constraining middle-market lending were financial sector policies and issues on the funding supply side.

Based on its findings, the amount of funding obtained by SMEs from formal institutions is limited, amounting to between 11 and 21 percent of their total current funding, with start-ups receiving much less.

"Most SMEs start with the founders' own resources, sometimes supplemented with loans from relatives and friends. Even after several years of operation, firms continue to rely on the owners and on internal resources," the study said. It pointed out that obtaining loans in the range of P150,000 to P5 million was particularly challenging.

One of the factors inhibiting banks from increasing lending to SMEs is the widely-held belief that the risks are greater and that the costs are higher in doing so. As such, the study noted that funding for the sector was largely based on policy-driven targeted intervention, including the provision of funds by government financial institutions either directly or using private banks as conduits and the mandatory allocation of credit.

Under the Magna Carta for SMEs, banks are required to set aside at least 8 percent of their loan portfolio to SMEs, which are defined to include enterprises with assets worth P3 million but not exceeding P100 million.

Bearish . . .

From page B1

slashed its key borrowing rates, he saw only a few drivers that could lift the market.

"Unless the US market rebounds, share prices may take the bearish path of consolidating with a negative bias. We are hopeful that share prices will hold up as the main composite index is now at a critical stage. It is trying to hold above its 3,600 support level. If the main index fails to hold, it may trigger a second leg of declines with the next support at 3,400," Vistan said.

Wall Street finished higher Friday as bargain-hunters snapped up stocks cheapened by housing and credit woes.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average closed 66.74 points (0.51 percent) higher at 13,176.79 while the tech-laced Nasdaq composite finished 18.73 points (0.72 percent) higher at 2,637.24. *Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson*

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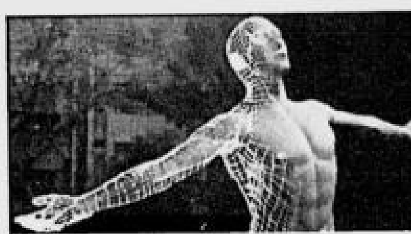

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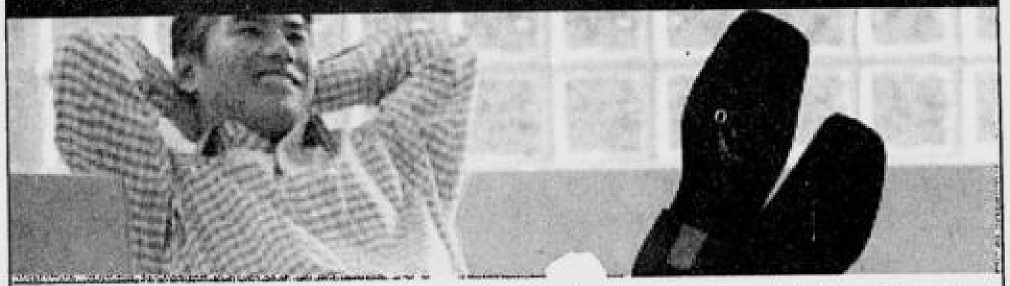

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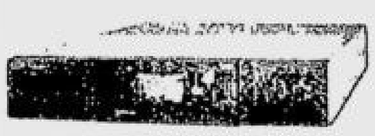

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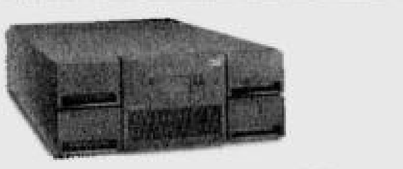

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BSP may ease bank branch cap

TKC ventures into mining

By Elizabeth S. Lacson

LISTED FIRM TKC STEEL CORP. IS ENTERING into a joint venture with a mining company in Zamboanga del Sur and Mikro-Tech Inc. of port operator Michael Romero.

The joint venture will be engaged in exploring prospective iron ore reserves to support TKC's proposed blast furnace and steel manufacturing projects.

TKC was scheduled to sign yesterday a memorandum of agreement (MOA) for the joint venture Mikro-Tech and Zamboanga-based Karanglan Resources and Mining Corp.

Under the deal, Mikor-Tech and KRMC will assign their rights to mining assets to the joint venture.

TKC, for its part, will purchase the iron ore output of the joint venture, which would be used for its blast furnace operations.

TKC's blast furnace is seen to double its production of steel billets from 300,000 metric tons to 600,000 MT per year by the fourth quarter of 2008.

This development followed TKC Steel's additional offering of 235 million shares at P9.68 a share. The company aims to raise P2.3 billion from the offering. The listing of the additional shares was set for Nov. 23.

Monetary Board to review proposal

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS IS planning a new wave of bank branching liberalization in the country for the first time since the selective lifting of the branch expansion moratorium in 2005.

During the general membership meeting of the Chamber of Thrift Banks on Friday, CTB vice president Pascual Garcia III reported that a BSP committee would submit to the Monetary Board later this month a proposed circular on the establishment of new bank branches.

"Among the salient features of the proposed circular include allowing rural banks and thrift banks with capitalization of [at least] P500 million, with no existing regular branch within Metro Manila or within the 'restricted areas' respectively, to establish one regular branch in those restricted areas for purposes of completing their nationwide network," Garcia said.

The so-called restricted areas are the major urban cities within the metropolis—Makati, Mandaluyong, Manila, Parañaque, Pasay, Pasig and Quezon, and the Municipality of San Juan—which remain covered by branch moratorium for now.

BSP studies indicated that these areas are adequately served by existing banking offices at present.

Likewise, part of the proposal, Garcia said, is a waiver on the business plan required from universal, commercial and thrift banks of good standing with total resources of at least P1 billion.

Garcia said the BSP committee had also included a proposal from CTB to scrap the 200-meter minimum distance requirement between branches set by the central bank.

At present, the 200-meter distance requirement is waived only in shopping malls or commercial center complexes, special export processing zones, public markets, fish ports, livestock/agricultural trading centers, Bureau of Internal Revenue collection offices and industrial/technological parks.

Under the existing rules, only branches of microfinance-oriented banks and branches that cater primarily to the credit needs of duly-registered Barangay Micro Business Enterprises are allowed to establish branches anywhere in the country, including restricted urban areas, subject to compliance with a minimum capital requirement of P325 million, in the case of thrift banks and rural banks.

Garcia also reported that the BSP was considering a proposal by CTB to relax certain overnight clearing line and rediscounting guidelines, as well as to allow thrift banks to engage in derivative transactions under the proposed framework on the liberalization of derivatives or hedging instruments.

Utilities to abandon RORB scheme

By Abigail L. Ho

THE ENERGY REGULATORY Commission has unveiled a new timeline for the conversion of more private distribution utilities into the performance-based rate-making (PBR) method of computing how much these firms charge their customers.

The new regime veers away from the decades-old return on rate base (RORB) scheme used at present.

Under the new timeline, the regulatory period for first entrants Manila Electric Co., Dagupan Electric Corp., and Cagayan Electric Power and Light Co. Inc. started last July 1 and would end on June 30, 2011.

The second group—composed of Cotabato Light and Power Corp., Iligan Light and Power Inc., and Mactan Electric Co.—would come under the PBR regime for the first time on April 1, 2009 up to March 30, 2013.

Cabanatuan Electric Corp., La Union Electric Co. Inc., Tarlac Electric Inc., Visayan Electric Co. Inc., Ibaan Electric and Engineering Corp., and Davao Light and Power Co. Inc. formed the third group entering the PBR regime, with their initial regulatory period spanning July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2014.

Making up the fourth entrant group, with an initial regulatory period of April 1, 2011 to March 2015, are Panay Electric Co. Inc., Subic Enerzone Corp., San Fernando Electric Light and Power Co., Bohol Light Co. Inc., and Angeles Electric Corp.

The PBR methodology replaces the 80-year-old RORB scheme that is used to determine the maximum rate that utilities could charge their customers.

The new rate-setting scheme uses incentives to motivate firms to reduce their costs and improve efficiency in their operations.

As it is incentive-based, the PBR methodology is expected to result in lower electricity rates, more efficient delivery of service to customers and optimal use of a firm's assets.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of November 16, 2007)

52-WEEK HIGH	52-WEEK LOW	STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
		BANKS					
17.5	6.8	Asiatrust Development Bank Inc.	8.4	8.4	8.2	8.2	34,000
73	43	Banco de Oro-EPCI Inc.	56	56	54	55	2,250,200
73.5	53	Bank of the Philippine Islands	65.5	65.5	62	62	2,670,700
748	540	China Banking Corp.	700	705	690	690	1,770
23.5	18.5	Citystate Savings Bank	23	23	23	23	600
0.63	0.36	Export and Industry Bank Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	1,900,000
75.5	47.5	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co.	56	56	52	53.5	13,196,100
65.5	39	Philippine National Bank	45.5	46	44.5	44.5	645,400
68	46	Philippine Savings Bank	61	62	61	62	4,000
39.57	19.57	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	25	25	24	24.5	6,995,800
90	61	Security Bank Corp.	72.5	72.5	71.5	71.5	75,000
66	42	Union Bank of the Philippines	43	44	43	43.5	548,600
		OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
5.6	1.92	ATR KimEng Financial Corp.	4	4	4	4	201,000
2.22	0.6	Bankard Inc.	1.96	1.98	1.94	1.98	5,533,000
16.25	4.6	CitisecOnline.com Inc.	12.25	12.5	11.75	11.75	1,371,600
1.6	0.5	First Abacus Financial Holdings Corp.	1.1	1.1	1	1	450,000
5.9	4.9	I-Remit Inc.	5.1	5.1	5.1	5.1	286,000
1,970.00	1,580.00	Manulife Financial Corp.	1,850.00	1,850.00	1,850.00	1,850.00	630
5	2.85	National Reinsurance Corp. of the Phils.	3.15	3.15	3	3	2,779,000
1,390.00	245	The Philippine Stock Exchange Inc	1,130.00	1,130.00	1,130.00	1,130.00	500
1.94	1.3	iVantage Corp	1.52	1.52	1.5	1.5	175,000
		ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
6.2	3.8	Aboitiz Power Corp	5	5.1	5	5	25,087,000
70.5	49	First Gen Corp.	60	61	60	60	168,600
92	51	First Phil. Holdings Corp.	75	75	70.5	70.5	2,392,100
17.5	8.8	Manila Water Co. Inc.	17	17	16	16	8,208,700
105.45	26.82	Manila Electric Co.	76	77.5	74.5	75	626,600
7.8	4.1	PNOC Energy Development Corp.	7.1	7.3	7.1	7.2	59,828,000
7.4	3.95	Petron Corp.	6.2	6.2	5.9	5.9	3,028,000
14.75	6.6	Phoenix Petroleum Philippines Inc.	7.3	7.3	7.3	7.3	6,000
2.3	1	Trans-Asia Oil and Energy Dev't Corp	1.74	1.8	1.68	1.7	5,028,000
		FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
6.3	3.2	Alaska Milk Corp.	5.2	5.2	4.95	5	1,096,000
2.41	1.48	Alliance Tuna International Inc.	1.8	1.88	1.8	1.8	2,028,000
28.5	19.5	Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	24	24	23.5	23.5	7,600
61	39	Jollibee Foods Corp.	49.5	49.5	48.5	49.5	359,500
9.1	5.7	Pancake House Inc.	8.9	8.9	8.9	8.9	6,000
0.98	0.5	RFM Corp.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	140,000
3.6	2.06	Roxas Holdings	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	163,000
80	51	San Miguel Corp. "A"	52.5	52.5	51.5	51.5	65,000
88	51.5	San Miguel Corp. "B"	54	54	51.5	51.5	283,700
20.75	13.75	Universal Robina Corp.	14	14.25	13.75	13.75	5,657,200
0.55	0.24	Vitarich Corp	0.3	0.36	0.3	0.36	100,000
		CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
6.1	2.65	EEI Corp	5.1	5.2	4.95	5	543,000
9.2	4.95	Holcim Philippines Inc.	8	8	8	8	251,000
2	0.64	Southeast Asia Cement Holdings Inc.	1.06	1.06	1.04	1.04	1,079,000
		CHEMICALS					
6.3	3.75	Chemrez Technologies Inc.	4.3	4.35	4.25	4.25	423,000
1.46	0.51	Mabuhay Vinyl Corp	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	260,000
		DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
0.75	0.17	Picop Resources Inc	0.4	0.4	0.39	0.4	5,960,000
9	8.1	Splash Corp	8.2	8.5	8.1	8.2	15,433,000
		HOLDING FIRMS					
3.9	2.7	A. Soriano Corp	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	139,000
0.185	0.0525	AJO.net Holdings Inc.	0.145	0.145	0.135	0.135	90,920,000
1.28	0.27	APC Group Inc.	0.64	0.64	0.62	0.62	1,750,000
3.65	1.5	ATN Holdings Inc. "A"	2.6	2.8	2.6	2.8	47,000
0.018	0.0075	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. "A"	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	20,000,000
9.7	5.7	Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc.	6.6	6.7	6	6.5	2,428,000
39	18.75	ABS-CBN Holdings Corp. - PDR	35.5	37	35.5	35.5	85,800
0.021	0.009	Alcorn Gold Resources Corp.	0.016	0.016	0.015	0.015	5,100,000
7.3	3.5	Alliance Global Group Inc.	5	5.1	4.95	5.1	26,768,000
1.38	0.56	Alsons Consolidated Resources Inc.	0.83	0.83	0.82	0.82	880,000
2.9	0.89	Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp.	2.65	2.65	2.48	2.55	8,005,000
8	0.8	Aries Prime Resources Inc.	3.5	3.7	3.5	3.7	10,000
645	397.92	Ayala Corp.	585	590	575	580	172,410
5.8	1.64	Benpres Holdings Corp.	4.05	4.05	3.9	3.9	11,314,000
12	4.95	DMCI Holdings Inc.	10.75	11	10.75	10.75	1,068,000
8	3.15	Filinvest Development Corp.	6.4	6.6	6.3	6.6	266,000
3.55	1.6	House of Investments Inc.	2.02	2.02	2	2	130,000
14.5	8.1	JG Summit Holdings Inc.	11	11.25	10.75	10.75	31,900
5.9	0.61	Jolliville Holdings Corp.	1.82	1.82	1.8	1.8	9,000
11.5	1.5	Minerales Industrias Corp.	6.9	7.6	6.8	6.9	17,280,000
8.5	2.95	PAL Holdings Inc.	5.8	5.8	5.7	5.7	82,000
0.28	0.016	Pacifica Inc. "A"	0.215	0.22	0.215	0.22	96,780,000
0.75	0.19	Prime Orion Philippines Inc.	0.47	0.47	0.47	0.47	490,000
452.5	268.53	SM Investments Corp.	350	355	350	355	356,030
0.73	0.14	Sinophil Corp.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	6,550,000
1.06	0.61	Solid Group Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	10,000
2	0.9	South China Resources	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	20,000
0.75	0.1	Wellex Industries Inc	0.3	0.31	0.3	0.31	2,260,000
1.1	0.26	Zeus Holdings Inc	0.64	0.75	0.64	0.68	1,360,000
		PROPERTY					
2.34	1	A Brown Co. Inc	1.58	1.58	1.5	1.5	515,000
8.9	5	Anchor Land Holdings Inc	7.5	7.6	7.2	7.2	62,000
1.06	0.4	Araneta Properties Inc.	0.69	0.73	0.68	0.71	1,440,000
19.25	11.88	Ayala Land Inc.	16	16.25	16	16	20,943,200
1.88	1	Belle Corp.	1.24	1.26	1.24	1.24	1,621,000
4.7	2.9	Cebu Holdings Inc.	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	4,000
3.83	2.08	City and Land Developers Inc.	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	184,000
0.86	0.39	Crown Equities Inc.	0.65	0.65	0.62	0.62	1,110,000
0.83	0.24	Cyber Bay Corp.	0.38	0.38	0.37	0.37	1,590,000
0.99.	0.52	Empire East Land Holdings Inc.	0.76	0.77	0.75	0.76	5,670,000
6.9	1.08	Eton Properties Philippines Inc.	3.9	4.1	3.9	3.95	107,000
0.47	0.055	Ever Gotesco Resources and Hold'gs Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.245	0.25	1,120,000
1.48	0.61	Fil-Estate Land Inc.	1	1	0.98	0.98	3,050,000
2.44	1.28	Filinvest Land Inc.	1.66	1.72	1.66	1.66	94,004,000
1.12	0.31	MRC Allied Industries Inc.	0.55	0.55	0.53	0.55	600,000
4.6	1.86	Megaworld Corp.	4.1	4.1	3.95	3.95	5,329,000
6.4	1.5	Metro Pacific Investments Corp.	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.7	188,000
5.2	2.2	Metro Pacific Investments Corp. - Warrants	3.6	3.65	3.5	3.5	353,000
0.7	0.125	Phil. Estates Corp.	0.32	0.33	0.32	0.33	2,030,000
0.87	0.32	Philippine Realty and Holdings Corp.	0.47	0.47	0.47	0.47	3,810,000
23	14.5	Robinson Land Corp.	18.5	18.75	18.5	18.5	1,186,300
5.9	1.93	SM Development Corp.	4.05	4.05	4	4	268,000
13.5	7.6	SM Prime Holdings Inc.	11.25	11.25	10.75	11.25	16,440,700
3.25	1.5	Shang Properties Inc.	2.2	2.22	2.2	2.2	354,000
4.5	0.38	Sta. Lucia Land Inc.	2.38	2.38	2.22	2.22	121,000
1.34	0.46	Suntrust Home Developers Inc.	0.56	0.56	0.55	0.55	530,000
0.49	0.09	Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.26	0.26	2,800,000
7.5	3.65	Vista Land and Lifescapes Inc.	4.95	5.1	4.9	5.1	26,649,000
		MEDIA					
38.5	18.75	ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	33	34	33	33	103,400
12	7.9	GMA Holdings Inc.	8.2	8.2	8.1	8.1	902,000
11.75	7.9	GMA Network Inc.	8.1	8.1	8	8	122,000
		TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
2.12	1.1	Digital Telecommunications Phils. Inc.	1.34	1.34	1.34	1.34	963,000
1,750.00	1,180.00	Globe Telecom Inc.	1,615.00	1,615.00	1,595.00	1,595.00	29,270
3,285.00	2,250.00	Phil. Long Distance Telephone Co	3,050.00	3,055.00	3,010.00	3,015.00	195,020
8.1	5.5	Pilipino Telephone Corp	7	7.2	7	7.2	840,000
		INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
0.39	0.17	Boulevard Holdings Inc	0.195	0.205	0.19	0.2	7,800,000
13.5	2.1	Diversified Financial Network Inc.	11.5	13.5	11.5	13.5	6,711,800
11.5	2.5	IPVG Corp.	8.6	8.6	8.3	8.4	1,575,000
0.065	0.027	ISM Communications Corp.	0.041	0.041	0.039	0.039	22,100,000
29.5	8.5	Imperial Resources Inc. "A"	15	15	15	15	11,000
5	1.62	Information Capital Tech. Ventures Inc.	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	18,000
2.9	1.48	Ionics Inc.	1.64	1.64	1.64	1.64	48,000
0.32	0.048	Island Information and Technology Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.17	0.18	2,580,000
2.08	1.1	Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.38	1.4	1.36	1.4	543,000
0.0725	0.03	Philweb Corp.	0.0525	0.0525	0.049	0.05	17,900,000
5.8	1.64	Transpacific Broadband Group Int'l. Inc.	2.85	2.85	2.8	2.8	415,000
		TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
6.8	3.6	Asian Terminals Inc.	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	396,000
42.5	18.75	Int'l Container Terminal Services Inc	39	40	39	39.5	2,000,600
2.16	0.93	Keppel Philippines Marine Inc	1.86	1.86	1.86	1.86	40,000
		HOTEL & LEISURE					
4.25	1.8	Leisure and Resorts World Corp.	2.7	2.7	2.5	2.5	51,000
1.16	0.32	Premiere Entertainment Productions Inc.	0.91	0.99	0.91	0.94	7,150,000
1.2	0.54	Waterfront Philippines Inc	0.83	0.83	0.8	0.8	460,000
		EDUCATION					
9.8	7.2	Centro Escolar University	7.9	7.9	7.9	7.9	8,000
3.7	2.6	iPeople Inc	3.15	3.15	3.15	3.15	173,000
		DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
6	2.02	Macroasia Corp	5.1	5.1	5.1	5.1	1,000
17.25	9.8	Pacific Online Systems Corp.	11.5	11.5	11	11.25	610,000
30	8.1	Paxys Inc.	8.4	8.4	8.1	8.1	287,000
150	22	Prime Gaming Philippines Inc	90	90	90	90	10,000
		MINING					
0.017	0.0085	Abra Mining and Industrial Corp.	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	430,000,000
7.1	3.6	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "A"	6.1	6.2	6	6.2	504,000
7.2	3.85	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "B"	6.2	6.4	6.2	6.4	815,000
21.25	7.8	Atlas Cons. Mining and Dev't Corp.	14.5	14.5	14	14	1,048,700
14.25	8.9	Benguet Corp. "A"	12.5	12.5	12.25	12.25	8,000
12.75	1.8	Dizon Copper Silver Mines Inc.	10	10.25	9.8	9.8	335,300
3.1	0.6	Geograce Resources Philippines Inc.	2	2.06	1.96	2	40,533,000
0.56	0.18	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "A"	0.51	0.53	0.49	0.5	208,820,000
0.61	0.22	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "B"	0.55	0.57	0.53	0.54	143,460,000
0.038	0.017	Manila Mining Corp. "A"	0.03	0.031	0.029	0.029	1,131,300,000
0.041	0.02	Manila Mining Corp. "B"	0.032	0.035	0.032	0.032	560,300,000
30	2	NiHAO Minerals Resources Int'l Inc.	21.75	21.75	20.5	20.5	2,249,600
0.021	0.0088	Omico Corp.	0.013	0.013	0.012	0.013	224,800,000
0.015	0.007	Omico Corp. - Warrants	0.009	0.0095	0.009	0.0095	46,000,000
11.25	3.5	Philex Mining Corp.	9.8	10	9.7	9.8	7,909,000
1.36	0.49	United Paragon Mining Corp.	0.84	0.84	0.79	0.79	2,750,000
1.8	0.69	Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1,240,000
		OIL					
0.58	0.25	Basic Energy Corp	0.33	0.33	0.32	0.32	7,260,000
0.029	0.01	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. "A"	0.024	0.024	0.023	0.023	77,200,000
0.03	0.01	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. "B"	0.025	0.025	0.025	0.025	124,200,000
13.75	9	Petroenergy Resources Corp.	10.25	10.25	10	10	90,100
0.032	0.0094	The Philodrill Corp.	0.027	0.027	0.027	0.027	76,400,000

AVERAGES			VOLUME	VALUE
Financial	876.53 DOWN	36.00	39,118,900	1,267,637,180.00
Industrial	4,272.27 DOWN	109.80	139,448,000	1,214,608,800.00
Holding Firms	2,069.74 DOWN	33.18	294,226,340	620,246,860.00
Property	1,622.41 DOWN	19.52	191,726,200	870,461,805.00
Service	1,810.70 DOWN	19.24	73,123,090	851,198,700.00
Mining & Oil	8,419.20 DOWN	281.25	3,041,222,700	489,527,605.00
All Shares Index	2,210.30 DOWN	37.72		
PSEI	3,598.96 DOWN	73.26		
		GRAND TOTALS	3,778,865,230	5,313,680,950.00

COMPILED BY SCHATZI QUODALA, INQUIRER RESEARCH

SOURCE: TECHNISTOCK, PSE

No Free Lunch

From page B2

and corruption, regulatory and policy favoritism, politically motivated government appointments and budget allocations, renewed oil price increases and likely wage hike demands.

My fellow academician on the PES panel, who is usually known for bullish forecasts, put it quite succinctly in his final statement: Let's hope, he said, that policy makers see the light. Otherwise, we could see the economy bust by 2009-2010.

Comments welcome at chabito@ateneo.edu

DA seeks

From page B4

commercializing the technologies.

Yap, in the meantime, ordered the continuous provision of post harvest facilities, such as low-cost flatbed dryers, to the 37 major rice-producing provinces in the country.

Also, the DA has stepped up the implementation of its Corn Production Enhancement Project with the goal of producing an additional 385,000 metric tons of corn.

GG&A Club Shares
SEC License Broker No.: BD-00131

Announcement:
We are now located at:
2nd Floor, Goodland Bldg. (formerly Nat'l Steel Bldg.)
377 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City
Tel No.: 890-GOLF (4653); 0917-8043072 ; Fax no. 896-1931

Quotation as of November 19, 2007

CLUB	SELLER	BUYER
ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB "A"	1,100,000	1,000,000
ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB "B"	1,250,000	-
BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	-	570,000
CAMP JOHN HAY	300,000	260,000
CANLUBANG	470,000	430,000
CAPITOL HILLS	40,000	-
CEBU COUNTRY CLUB	-	2,100,000
CELEBRITY SPORTS CLUB	100,000	80,000
CLUB FILIPINO	120,000	90,000
EAGLERIDGE "A"	150,000	-
EAGLERIDGE "B"	250,000	-
EAGLERIDGE "C"	350,000	300,000
FOREST HILLS "A"	100,000	80,000
LUISITA GOLF "A"	350,000	250,000
MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "A"	-	200,000
MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "B"	300,000	220,000
MANILA GOLF (CORP)	23,000,000	21,000,000
MANILA GOLF (IND)	22,000,000	20,000,000
MANILA POLO	5,000,000	4,700,000
MANILA SOUTHWOODS "A"	300,000	280,000
MANILA SOUTHWOODS "B"	650,000	630,000
MANILA YACHT CLUB	190,000	-
MIMOSA (IND)	220,000	-
MT. MALARAYAT GOLD "A"	160,000	-
ORCHARD GOLF CLUB "A"	160,000	140,000
ORCHARD GOLF CLUB "B"	280,000	-
ORCHARD GOLF CLUB "C"	300,000	-
QUEZON CITY SPORTS CLUB	150,000	130,000
ROCKWELL CLUB	350,000	265,000
SPA & LODGE	500,000	450,000
STA. ELENA "A"	-	1,700,000
STA. ELENA "B"	-	1,900,000
TAGAYTAY COUNTRY CLUB	300,000	280,000
TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS	680,000	640,000
TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS	640,000	630,000
THE PALMS COUNTRY CLUB "A"	330,000	300,000
VALLE VERDE (IND)	100,000	80,000
VALLEY GOLF	240,000	210,000
WACK-WACK GOLF CLUB	10,000,000	9,500,000

Email: ggashare@mozcom.com
Website: www.ggaclubshares.com

G & W clubshares
SEC License Broker No.: A-17597

FREE PLAYING RIGHTS AVAILABLE — As of November 19, 2007

SHARES AVAILABLE

CLUB	SELLER	BUYER
Alabang Country Club A/B*	1,150,000/1,230,000*	1,000,000
Alta Vista A/B*/Corp.**	-	260,000/Pls. Call*
Baguio Country Club	600,000	560,000
Camp John Hay	330,000	280,000
Canlubang Golf	500,000	-
Canyon Woods	90,000	-
Club Filipino	120,000	80,000
Eagleridge A/B*/C**	250,000*/350,000**	130,000/200,000*
Eastridge A/B*	230,000*	150,000*
Forest Hills A/B*/C**	90,000/160,000*/200,000**	50,000/160,000*
Luisita Golf A	300,000	Pls. Call
Manila Golf Corporate	23,000,000	20,000,000
Manila Golf Individual	Pls. Call	18,000,000
Manila Polo	5,000,000	3,900,000
Manila Southwoods A/B*	300,000/Pls. Call*	250,000
Makati Sports Club A/B*	250,000	190,000
Manila Yacht Club Ind.	200,000	-
Metropolitan Club A/B*	150,000	-
Mimosa C1/C2*/C3**	220,000/580,000**	150,000/400,000*/600,000**
Mt. Malarayat A	180,000	-
Orchard A/B*/C**	170,000/250,000*/380,000**	150,000
Quezon City Sports Club	170,000	120,000
Riviera Golf A/B*/C**	150,000*/250,000**	Pls. Call
Rockwell Leisure Club	350,000	Pls. Call
Royale Tagaytay CC	65,000	-
Sherwood A/B*/C**	70,000/130,000*	100,000*
Splendido Taal	260,000	Pls. Call
Sta. Elena Golf A/B*	2,100,000/2,500,000*	1,600,000
The Palms Country Club	340,000	320,000
Tagaytay Country Club	300,000	290,000
Tagaytay Highlands	680,000	630,000
Tagaytay Midlands	670,000	630,000
Valley Golf	250,000	210,000
Valle Verde Ind.	100,000	80,000
Wack Wack Golf	Pls. Call	-

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as of November 16, 2007

CLUB	SELLING	BUYING
ALABANG A	1,200,000	1,100,000
ALABANG B	1,250,000	PLS. CALL
BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	PLS. CALL	560,000
CANLUBANG GOLF CLUB	465,000	PLS. CALL
CELEBRITY CLUB	100,000	80,000
CLUB FILIPINO	PLS. CALL	100,000
CLUB PUNTA FUEGO	350,000	PLS. CALL
COUNTRY CLUB AT TAGAYTAY	PLS. CALL	PLS. CALL
EAGLERIDGE A	PLS. CALL	140,000
EAGLERIDGE C	380,000	PLS. CALL
EASTRIDGE B	PLS. CALL	150,000
FONTANA B	70,000	PLS. CALL
FOREST HILLS B	PLS. CALL	160,000
FOREST HILLS C	200,000	PLS. CALL
MAKATI SPORTS CLUB A	PLS. CALL	200,000
MAKATI SPORTS CLUB B	PLS. CALL	220,000
MANILA GOLF CORP	23,000,000	20,000,000
MANILA GOLF IND	22,000,000	19,000,000
MANILA POLO CLUB	5,000,000	PLS. CALL
MANILA SOUTHWOODS A	290,000	PLS. CALL
MANILA SOUTHWOODS B	650,000	640,000
METROCLUB A	150,000	PLS. CALL
ORCHARD A	160,000	145,000
ORCHARD B	350,000	PLS. CALL
ORCHARD C	350,000	PLS. CALL
QUEZON CITY SPORTS	140,000	120,000
RIVIERA GOLF B	PLS. CALL	100,000
RIVIERA GOLF C	180,000	PLS. CALL
ROCKWELL CLUB	PLS. CALL	280,000
ROYALE TAGAYTAY	60,000	PLS. CALL
SPA & LODGE	550,000	PLS. CALL
SPLENDIDO	PLS. CALL	150,000
STA. ELENA A	PLS. CALL	1,700,000
SUMMIT POINT C	450,000	PLS. CALL
TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS	PLS. CALL	630,000
TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS	650,000	PLS. CALL
VALLEY GOLF	250,000	PLS. CALL
VALLE VERDE	100,000	PLS. CALL
WACK WACK	PLS. CALL	9,500,000

PLAYING RIGHTS ALSO AVAILABLE-FREE RENTAL
Please contact AMIE, MYRA
Tel #s 8186936/ 8186991/ 8926193
Fax # 8185453, email: fvrhi@info.com.ph
Please visit our website at www.fvrhi.com
GF Tuscan Bldg. 114 V.A Rufino St. Legaspi Village, Makati City

Maybank

CURRENCIES

November 16, 2007 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.683761	1.000000	43.1150
Japan	Yen	0.006196	0.009062	0.3907
United Kingdom	Pound	1.398564	2.045400	88.1874
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.087820	0.128437	5.5376
Switzerland	Franc	0.609304	0.891107	38.4201
Canada	Dollar	0.694385	1.015538	43.7849
Singapore	Dollar	0.470585	0.688231	29.6731
Australia	Dollar	0.608870	0.890472	38.3927
Bahrain	Dinar*	1.819964	2.661698	114.7591
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.183314	0.268097	11.5590
Brunei	Dollar	0.468972	0.685871	29.5713
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000073	0.000107	0.0046
Thailand	Baht	0.021707	0.031746	1.3687
UAE	Dirham	0.186311	0.272480	11.7480
EU	Euro	1.000000	1.462500	63.0557
Korea	Won	0.000747	0.001093	0.0471
China	Yuan**	0.092116	0.134720	5.8085
Denmark	Kroner	0.134208	0.196279	8.4626
India	Rupee	0.017452	0.025523	1.1004
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.202896	0.296736	12.7938
New Zealand	Dollar	0.518354	0.758093	32.6852
Sweden	Kroner	0.107869	0.157759	6.8018
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.021174	0.030967	1.3351

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY time—Nov. 15, 2007

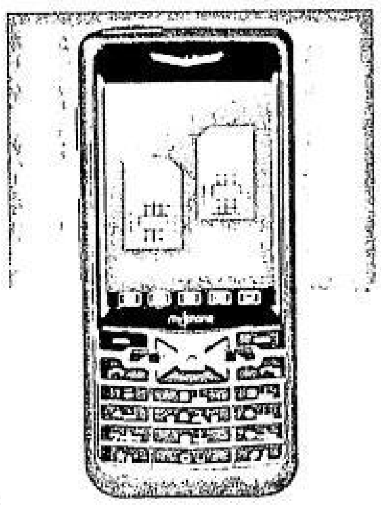
* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen.

** Asian time closing rate as of Nov. 15, 2007

Solid sees steady growth in 2008

High-growth markets eyed

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson



T22-DUO

CONSUMER ELECTRONICS and technology firm Solid Group Inc. sees steady growth in 2008 as it ventures into high-growth niche markets, marked by the rollout this year of its dual sim mobile phones this year.

In an interview, Solid Group president David Lim said revenues would also be driven in 2008 by sales of its maiden residential condominium project in Ermita, Manila dubbed "Zen Towers." The first 200-unit tower will be turned over to the buyers in December.

"2008 will be a turning point for the Solid Group," Lim said.

Lim said Solid Group expects to book at least P2.3 billion in new revenues next year, to be driven largely by sales of its "myPhone" series of touch-screen dual Sim phones and Zen Towers.

As of the first half of this year, Solid Group reported a revenue of P615 million.

Last September, Solid Group launched its myPhone models to compete with the units sold by big players, including Nokia and Motorola.

In a month's time, the company sold 10,000 units, raking in P50 million in sales, even with little advertising.

The initial set of myPhones come in three models, the T11, T22-Duo and T33.

The T11, which sells for P6,999, is a single SIM multimedia touch screen phone that runs on a GPRS network and has a 1.3 megapixel camera. It has blueetooth technology, a webcam function and a built-in 1 (megabyte) MB user memory. For its multimedia features, it has an MP3 or MP4 player and video recorder.

The T22-Duo, which is priced at P9,999, is the first dual active SIM phone with a larger memory of 2MB. It is also a touch screen phone with the same multimedia functions like the T11 and has two stereo speakers with 3D surround effect. It has a 2 megapixel camera and a micro flash memory card slot that could expand its memory up to 1 gigabyte (GB).

The top of the line model is the T33, which is a GPS (global positioning system or mapping device) pocket PC phone that sells for P19,999. It has a 50 MB user memory, a 2 megapixel camera, a flash memory card slot that could expand the memory to up to 2 GB and a touch screen with handwriting recognition. Its operating system is Windows Mobile 5 and could perform Word, Excel and Powerpoint functions.

PNB

PUBLIC SEALED BIDDING

To be held in PNB Asset Management Sector

CAGAYAN DE ORO BRANCH

Corrales Ave. corner Toribio Chaves Sts., Cagayan de Oro City.

Sealed offer and cashier's/ manager's check payment for deposit must be submitted on November 28, 2007, Wednesday at 3:00 P.M.

Property Location: Lots 11 & 10, Block 4, Brgy. 24 Sergio Osmena St. Poblacion, Cagayan de Oro City

Description	TCT	Lot Area (sqm.)	Improvement (sqm.)	Minimum Bid Price
Residential & Commercial	T-137560	360	103	P 14,662,800.00
	T-137559	360	204	
		720 sqm.	307 sqm.	

Submission Procedure:

The sealed offer must be labeled

"Public bidding - Lots 11 & 10, Block 4, Brgy. 24 Sergio Osmena St. Poblacion Cagayan de Oro City".

FOR INQUIRY

PNB Asset Management Sector

NORTHERN MINDANAO REGIONAL DESK

Account Officer : MA1 MELECIO INTONG

TEL NOs: (088) 857-5545

Way of Sealed Bids in CASH or INSTALLMENT and on "As-is Where-is" basis.

PRICES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

TERMS OF REFERENCE:

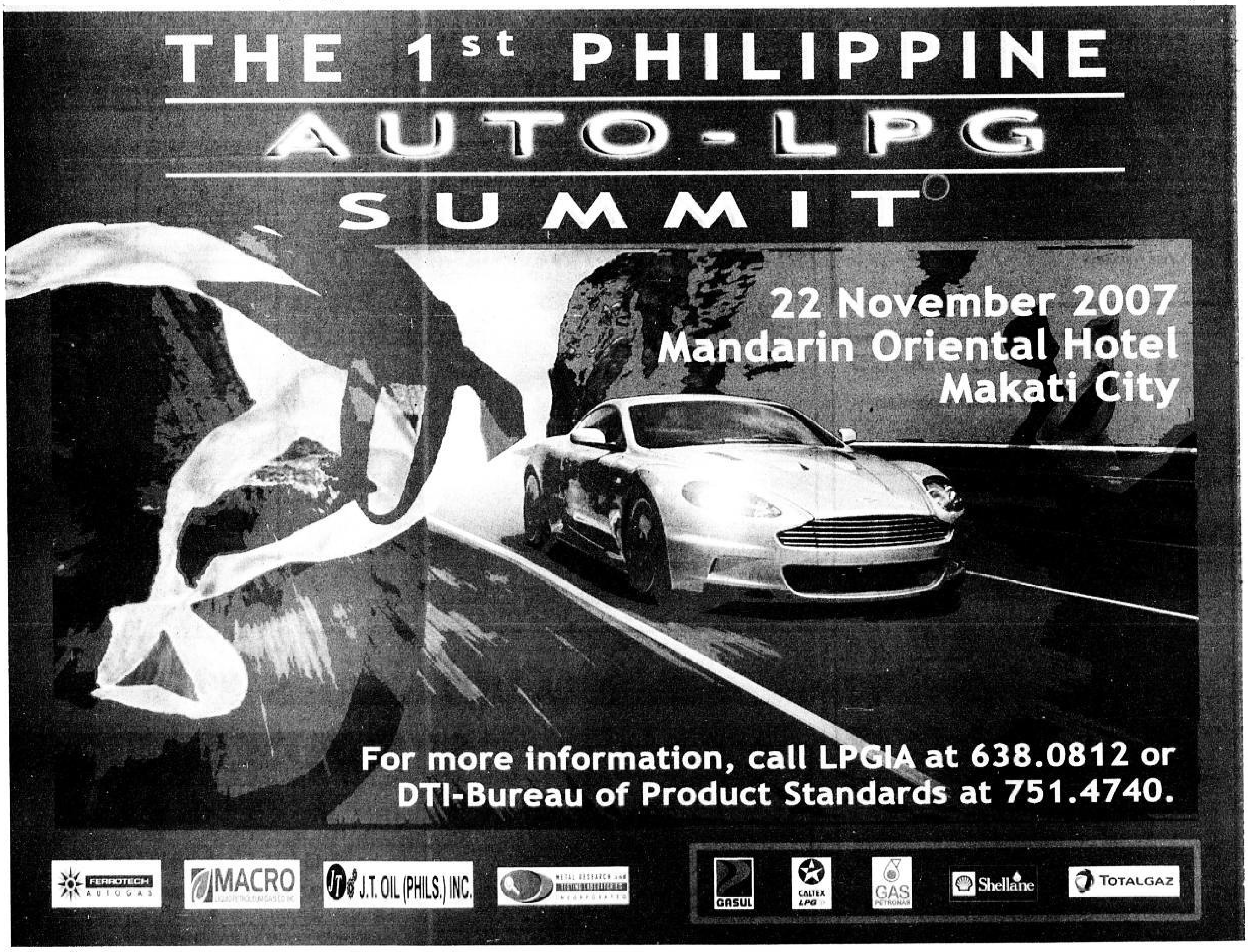
1. Bidders should use the Bank-prescribed "Purchase Proposal Form" accompanied by a Buyer's Information Sheet (Annex A). If a bidder is a representative of a corporation, the representative must submit a Secretary's Certificate to represent the said corporation.
2. Sealed offer/s to buy must be accompanied by non-interest bearing deposit of at least 10% of the offered purchase price in the form of Cashier's/Manager's Check payable to Philippine National Bank.
3. As a general rule "no bid below the floor price shall be accepted".
4. PNB's decision is final and binding. No withdrawal of bids shall be allowed once the winning bid has been selected and approved by PNB. Any withdrawal of bid by winning bidder shall result to forfeiture by PNB of deposit.
5. In the event the winning bidder failed to comply with the specified payment terms, the 10% deposit shall be forfeited as penalty and the sale shall be automatically cancelled.
6. PNB reserves the right to reject any and all bids at its sole discretion, waive any defects or informality on the bids received and accepts the bid most advantageous to PNB but does not guarantee that any award shall be made.
7. PNB shall be responsible in the payment of Creditable Withholding Tax (CWT) up to the selling price only and any excess shall be for the account of the winning bidder. All other expenses such as documentary stamp tax, transfer tax, registration fees and other fees related to the transfer of the title in the name of the winning bidder shall be for the exclusive account of the winning bidder.
8. PNB does not assume any obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify any bidder for any expense that may be incurred in the bidding process.
9. PNB reserves the right to withdraw the foregoing property at any time before the deadline of submission of bids.
10. Buyer shall be responsible in ejecting occupants of the property and related expenses shall be for the buyer's account.
11. Winning Bidder to execute Deed of Acknowledgement stating that he is aware that portion (more than a meter depth) of back of building erected on the property has encroached the adjacent lot and any/all responsibility expenses related to such shall be taken cared by the buyer.

LPGIA

DEPARTMENT OF TRADE & INDUSTRY

LTO

LTFRB



THE 1st PHILIPPINE AUTO-LPG SUMMIT

22 November 2007
Mandarin Oriental Hotel
Makati City

For more information, call LPGIA at 638.0812 or DTI-Bureau of Product Standards at 751.4740.

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VECO
VISAYAN ELECTRIC COMPANY

NOTICE TO THE STOCKHOLDERS OF VISAYAN ELECTRIC COMPANY, INC.

Notice is hereby given that the Securities and Exchange Commission has approved the one for ten reverse stock split of Visayan Electric Company, Inc.'s (the "Company" or "VECO") common shares with the approval of the increase in par value of the Company's common shares from P200.00 per share to P2,000.00 per share.

The reverse stock split will result in every ten VECO common shares with a pre-reverse stock split par value of P200.00 per share on a total par value of P2,000.00 being exchanged for one post-reverse stock split VECO common share with a par value of P2,000.00 per share. Thus, all stockholders will end up with less number of common shares post-reverse stock split but with the same total par value as their pre-reverse stock split shareholdings.

Fractional Shares

Some stockholders may end up with fractional shares following the reverse stock split. As approved by the Board of Directors and ratified by the stockholders, all shareholders who ended up holding fractional shares after the reverse stock split are given the option to top up their fractional shares to up to one whole share by paying the price difference between one whole share and their respective fractional share. Any shareholder who fails to exercise the option to top up shall instead receive cash payment for his fractional share. The fractional shares of shareholders who fail to exercise their option to top up shall be acquired by VECO as treasury shares. For this purpose, the Board of Directors has set the selling or buying price of any share or fraction thereof at the post-reverse stock split price of P5,000.00 per share, or two and a half times the post-reverse stock split par value of P2,000.00 per share.

Notices of the option to top up were given to all stockholders who ended up with fractional shares following the reverse stock split. If you did not receive any notice from VECO but felt that you might be qualified to exercise the option to top up, kindly contact:

MS. JESSEL TRAVERO
Investor Relations Officer
Visayan Electric Company, Inc.
J. Panis St., Banilad, Cebu City 6000
Tel. No. (32) 230-8326

Surrender of Stock Certificates

All pre-reverse stock split stock certificates are now deemed cancelled by VECO. Please surrender your pre-reverse stock split stock certificates to VECO so new stock certificates reflecting your post-reverse stock split stockholdings can be issued in your favor.

If you have questions about the reverse stock split, please address them to:

THE CORPORATE SECRETARY
Visayan Electric Company, Inc.
c/o Aboitiz Corporate Center
Gov. Manuel Cuenco Avenue
Kasambagan, Cebu City
Attention: Atty. M. Jasmine S. Oporto
or Atty. Leah I. Geraldez
or Atty. Catherine R. Atay
Tel. No. (32) 231-2580

(Sgd.) **M. JASMINE S. OPORTO**
Corporate Secretary

(Sgd.) **JESS ANTHONY GARCIA**
Assistant Corporate Secretary

(PDI - Nov. 19, 2007)

REWARD

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Notice is given to the public that Writs of Execution have been issued against the following persons who are all previous tenants of **GREENHILLS SHOPPESVILLE ARCADE**, San Juan City by the Metropolitan Trial Court Branch 57, San Juan, Metro Manila:

Name of Defendant	Civil Case No.	Last Known Address
ABELLERA, Josephine J.	9124	11 Guyabano St., Proj 2, QC
APOLONIO, Rosauro	9010	Brgy Lumang Bayan, Plaridel, Bulacan
BALTAZAR, Ma. Luz	9150	51 Umbel St., Roxas District, QC
BARIN, Magnolia	9164	47 Dumalay St., Sta. Monica, Novaliches, QC
BLANCO, Jasmin F.	9155	Unit 0, Hemady Townhomes, New Manila, QC
BLANCO, Russel	9148	Unit 0, Hemady Townhomes, New Manila, QC
CASTANEDA, Ma. Carla V.	9033	8843 Sampaloc St., San Antonio Village, Makati City
CATALAN, Mayorico P.	9236	3 Pag-asa St., San Jose, QC
DESCALLAR, Michelle	9171	Balangueno Vill, Malina Aplaya, Davao City
DONA, Saturnino Jr. C.	9163	1903 Tramo St., Pasay City
ENRIQUEZ, Jennifer T.	9019	26 Balmorie St., San Lorenzo Village, Makati City
FAUSTINO, Lina V.	9170	Unit 0, Hemady Townhomes, New Manila, QC
HERNANDEZ, Mary Ann F.	9038	605 Rosita St., Sto. Nino, Marikina City
JAURIGUE, Ma. Teresa D.	9005	Unit 229, Kaimitoville, Kaimito St.,Valle Verde 2, Pasig City
LOPEZ, Aileen A.	9009	Manila Steam Laundry, 2223 España St., Sampaloc, Manila
LUCIANO, Maura I.	9153	48 Samar Ave. cor Albano St., South Triangle, QC
MACEDA, Anna Gisel R.	9008	56 Highland Drive, Blue Ridge, QC
MANGUBAT, Leopoldo	9035	372 Columbia St., East Greenhills, Mandaluyong City
MARALIT, Ariel P.	9014	3 Don Pepe St., Sta. Mesa Heights, QC
MARTINEZ, Michael P.	9011	19 Mt. Clements St., Filinvest, QC
MENESES, Rolando F.	9072	3-C, Palma St., Xavierville Subd., Ph.1, Loyola Hghts, QC
NOVELO, Filipina	9073	203-D, L&F Apt., Erwin Garcia St., Cubao, QC
ONG, Eduardo C.	9025	3895 Araro St., Palanan, Makati City
PACIOLES, Mariano Jr.	9032	26-E Eisenhower St., North Greenhills, San Juan City
PAMINTUAN, Ma.Belinda M.	9031	54 Ubay St., Sta. Mesa Heights, QC
RECTO, Rorietta	9018	Javilla Townhouse, 50 Felix Manalo St., QC
REYES, Ma. Dansel K.	9154	53A Laura St., Plainview, Mandaluyong City
REYES, Floren	9039	613 A. Mabini St., Manggahan, Pasig City
ROJAS, Lorenzo S.	9125	95 Kamias Road, QC
SAN AGUSTIN, Ma. Lysandra T.	9173	36 Camia St., Valle Verde II, Pasig City
TIONGSON, John Roderick R.	9172	36 Camia St., Valle Verde II, Pasig City
TOLENTINO, Melinda S.	9003	17 Dampol St., Damar Village, QC

The above defendants are advised to call our lawyers, **DY & ASSOCIATES LAW FIRM** at Telephone Nos. 531-1249 & 535-4931 to discuss their compliance with the Writs.

The public is likewise requested to convey any information on the present whereabouts and assets of the above-named defendants to our lawyers. A **CASH REWARD** will be given to any person who can provide information leading to the successful collection of the amount that the above defendants are adjudged to pay. All information given shall be treated with strict confidence.

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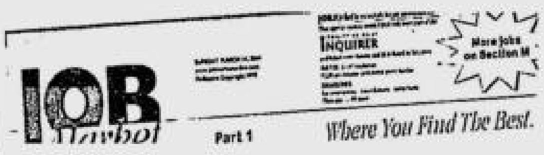
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Republic of the Philippines
Department of Finance
Securities and Exchange Commission
SEC Bldg. EDSA, Greenhills, Mandaluyong City

INVITATION TO BID

The Securities and Exchange Commission, through its Bids and Awards Committee for IT Goods and Services (BAC-IT), invites qualified local bidders to bid for Co-location Services for the SEC servers and network equipment with an Approved Budget Contract (ABC) or P2,800,000.00. Project Duration is for one (1) year.

Source of Funds: RA 9401

A complete set of bidding documents may be obtained by the bidders starting 12 November to 19 November 2007 from the MIS Division, Basement, SEC Building, EDSA, Greenhills, Mandaluyong City upon payment of One-Thousand Pesos (P1,000.00) per set of bid document. For further details, you may contact Ms. Lilia O. Pinzon/Ms. Ma. Theresa Samera at Tel. No. 727-6894.

Pre-Bid Conference will be on 23 November 2007, 2:00 p.m. at the ERID Conference Room, 7th floor, SEC Building.

Deadline for the submission and opening of bid envelopes will be on 11 December 2007, 2:00 p.m. at the ERID Conference Room, 7th floor, SEC Building. Late bid shall not be accepted. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend the said opening.

Republic Act 9184, and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) shall govern all particulars relative to Eligibility, Bid Bond, Pre-Bid Conference, Bid Evaluation, Post Qualification and Awards of Contracts.

The SEC reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to annul the bidding process, to reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder/s and to waive any required formalities therein and to award the contract to the bidder whose proposal as evaluated is most advantageous to the Commission.

SEC also assumes no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidder for any expenses or loss that may be incurred in the preparation of the bids, nor does it guarantee that any award will be made.

(Sgd.) **JOSE P. AQUINO**
Chairman, BAC-IT

(PDI--Nov. 12 & 19, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Meralco Avenue, DepED Complex, Pasig City
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE II

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID,

The Physical Facilities and Schools Engineering Division (PFSED) of Department of Education (DepED), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites contractors registered with and classified by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB), licensed by CIAP, and whose eligibility documents are on file with the DepED Central Office or DPWH Contractors Registry to bid for the hereunder contract through the alternative method of procurement provided in R.A. 9184:

Name of Project : **Repair of Various DepED Offices under Supplemental Appropriations of FY 2006 (RA 9358)**
Location : **DepED Central Office, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City**
Approved Budget for the Contract : **Php8,965,780.42**

Bids received that exceed the ABC shall be rejected.

Prospective bidders should possess a valid PCAB License applicable to the contract, have completed similar civil works (vertical construction) largest single contract with a value of at least 50% of the ABC, and key personnel and equipment available for the prosecution of the contract. The BAC will use non-discretionary pass/fail criteria in the Eligibility Check and Examination of Bids. The BAC will conduct post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bid Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The Schedule of BAC activities are as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Submission of Letter of Intent (LOI) and Application for Eligibility; and Issuance of Eligibility Documents	November 19 - 26, 2007 8:00 A.M. – 5:00 P.M.
2. Submission/Receipt of Eligibility Requirements (Opening of Eligibility Requirements – November 28, 2007)	Deadline November 27, 2007 8:00 A.M. – 5:00 P.M.
3. Notice of Results of Eligibility Check	November 29, 2007
4. Issuance of Bid Documents	Starting on November 29, 2007
5. Pre-bid Conference Venue: Bulwagan ng Karunungan, Ground Floor Rizal I Bldg., DepED Complex, Meralco Ave., Pasig City	December 6, 2007, 9:00 a.m.
6. Receipt and Opening of Bids Venue: FMS Conference Room, 2nd Rizal II Bldg., DepED Complex, Meralco Ave., Pasig City	December 20, 2007, 10:00 a.m.

The BAC will issue to prospective bidders the Eligibility Documents at **Procurement Service, BAC Secretariat, Rm., 508, 5th Floor, Mabini Building, DepED Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City** upon submission of a Letter of Intent (LOI) and payment in cash of a non-refundable amount of **Philippine Pesos Five Hundred and 00/100 only (Php 500.00)**. Prospective bidders shall submit the Eligibility Requirements to the BAC at the said address. They may also obtain the results of the Eligibility Check by the BAC at the same address. BAC activities Nos. 1- 4 shall be conducted at 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. during DepED working days only.

The BAC will issue Bidding Documents only to bidders declared by the BAC eligible to bid upon payment in cash of a non-refundable amount of **Philippine Pesos Eight Thousand and 00/00 only (Php8,000.00)** The BAC Secretariat could be reached through Tel Nos. (02) 633-9343 or Fax No. (02) 636-6543. Information is also available at **http://www.deped.gov.ph** or **www.procurementservice.org**

The Purchaser assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expense incurred in the preparation of the bid. Likewise, the Purchaser reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

(Sgd.) **JESUS G. GALVAN**
Asst. Secretary and BAC II Vice Chairperson

(PDI–Nov. 19, 2007)

City Government of Zamboanga
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
City Hall, Zamboanga City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The **CITY GOVERNMENT OF ZAMBOANGA** invites PhilGEPS registered suppliers to apply for the following items.

Name of Projects	Approved Budget for the Contract	Date/Time		Price of Bid Documents (non-refundable)
		Pre-Bid Conference	Deadline/ Opening of Bids	
1. Construction Supplies	P3,172,855.00	November 29, 2007	December 10, 2007	P1,100.00

The Bid documents shall be available at the City Mayor's Office, Procurement, Acquisition and Awards Division, City Hall, Zamboanga City starting **November 19-26, 2007** upon payment of non-refundable fee indicated above.

The Pre-Bid conference shall be held at **City Engineer's Office, Conference Hall, City Hall, Zamboanga City.**

The Bidder shall drop and enclose the original of the Technical Proposal in one sealed envelope; whereas, the original of the Financial Proposal shall be enclosed in another sealed envelope. Both envelopes shall then be placed in another single envelope. In the bid box located at the abovementioned address.

For more information, please call the Procurement, Acquisition and Awards Division at telephone no. (062) 992-7763.

The **CITY GOVERNMENT OF ZAMBOANGA** reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

(Sgd.) Atty. **SAMUEL A. MARIANO**
BAC Vice-Chairman

(PDI – November 19, 2007)

NOTICE OF CHANGE OF STOCK CERTIFICATES OF PAL HOLDINGS, INC.

Please be advised that the Securities and Exchange Commission approved on January 19, 2007 the Company's Amended Articles of Incorporation and Certificate of Increase of Capital Stock reflecting the change in the corporate name from "Baguio Gold Holdings Corporation" to "PAL HOLDINGS, INC." and the increase in authorized capital stock from "P400 million divided into 400 million shares with a par value of P1.00 per share" to "P20 BILLION DIVIDED INTO 20 BILLION SHARES WITH A PAR VALUE OF P1.00 PER SHARE." As a result of the foregoing, the Company will change the old stock certificates and issue new stock certificates reflecting the said changes.

Any stockholder desiring to have their stock certificates replaced with the new certificates under the new corporate name and authorized capital stock of P20 billion, may surrender its/his/her/their old stock certificates to the Stock and Transfer Agent, Allied Banking Corporation – Trust and Investments Division, 4/F Allied Bank Center, 6754 Ayala Avenue, Makati City from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. and from 1:30 to 4:00 p.m. The Stock and Transfer Agent will notify the respective shareholders when to claim the new stock certificates.

For inquiries, you may call telephone no. 816-33-11 local 3228/3206 and ask for Mr. Francis Doroja.

Thank you.

(Original Signed)
MA. CECILIA L. PESAYCO
Corporate Secretary

Republic of the Philippines
CITY OF SANTA ROSA
Province of Laguna

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

PURCHASING AND DELIVERING OF GROCERY ITEMS FOR "MALIGAYA AT MALUSOG NA PASKO SA LUNGSOD NG SANTA ROSA 2007"

1. The *City Government of Santa Rosa through the General Fund of 2007* intends to apply the sum of ***FIVE MILLION FOUR HUNDRED EIGHTY-SEVEN THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED SEVENTY-SIX PESOS AND EIGHTY CENTAVOS (Php5,487,876.80)*** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for ***Purchasing and Delivering of Grocery Items for "Maligaya at Malusog na Pasko sa Lungsod ng Santa Rosa 2007", Project Reference Number: G-2007-738.*** Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening. The schedule of BAC activities is as follows:

BAC ACTIVITIES	DATE	VENUE
1. Issuance of Bid Documents upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Php5,487.88	Nov. 19-Dec. 3, 2007 8:00 AM-5:00 PM	BAC Office Santa Rosa City Hall J.P. Rizal Blvd., Market Area City of Santa Rosa, Laguna
2. Pre-bid Conference	November 27, 2007 10:00 AM	
3. Receipt and Opening of Bids	December 10, 2007 10:00 AM	

2. All Bids for the abovementioned project must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form and in the amount as stated in the Bid Date Sheet (BDS) or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted.
3. Request for clarifications must be submitted at least ten (10) calendar days before the scheduled opening of bids as tabulated above. For further inquiry, please call telephone number (049) 534-1192.
4. The *City Government of Santa Rosa* reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

(Sgd.) **ROMULO M. CATINDIG**
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI–Nov. 19, 2007)

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SR. URSULA "ADELAIDA" L. MELLA
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December 25, 1930
who passed away on November 17, 2007 at the age of 76.

MAY SHE REST IN PEACE

Funeral Mass will be on November 19, 2007 at 2:00 p.m. at the La Consolacion Convent Chapel, 273 Santolan Road, San Juan, Metro Manila. Interment will follow at the La Loma Cemetery after the Mass.

Death Notice

HILARIO JOSE R. BERANGO, JR
Jan. 19, 1933 - Nov. 14, 2007
Interment today at Bacacay, Albay after the 2 p.m. Mass.

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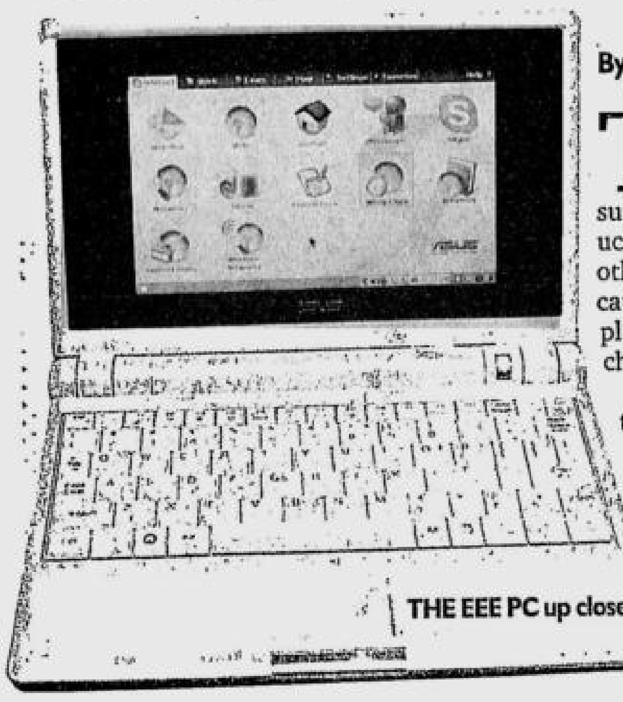
Bringing notebook technology down to a child's level

CHILDREN may freely have their way, learning and playing, with Asus' subnotebooks.

PHOTOS BY EUGENE ARANETA



THE EEE PC up close

By Raquel P. Gomez

TAIWAN-BASED ASUS, THE global producer of an extensive range of computer, consumer and communication products and devices, has launched another product in its subnotebook category—the Eee PC, a 7-inch display Intel platform portable PC for children as young as five years old.

Asus Eee PC, packed with simple-to-use applications, a Wi Fi feature, plus the bare essentials for a computing device, targets children, and probably their mothers with tech phobia, to help them feel at ease with technology, according to Asus officials.

Peter Chua, Asus sales manager for the Philippine office, said the Asus Eee PC has been packaged to appeal as a "toy" and "learning device" for a child. Because of its easy to use interface, mothers too will have fun dabbling with the device.

"We usually buy expensive electronics like a notebook and we will tell our kids not to touch it," according to Chua. "But on the other side of it, we want our kids to be technically savvy or computer literate. So this is one thing that the product tries to address."

Chua said students at Prep Inc. School recently had their way with the devices, and the company was more than happy with the feedback they received from the children.

The kids, whose ages range from five to eight years old, were not inhibited in playing and learning with the device they regard as a tech toy. They had fun surfing the Web wirelessly, learning from the pre-installed educational games, according to Chua.

For P19,000 plus, the Asus Eee PC subnotebook is loaded with the following hardware features—Intel mobile CPU, 512 DDR2 memory, Intel UMA for graphics, built-in audio, a 0.3 megapixel camera, integrated 802.11b/g wireless LAN and a 4-gigabyte solid state drive. It has a card reader and ports include three USB 2.0, VGA connector, modem and LAN, headphone and microphone. Battery life is up to three hours.

As to software, the device already features a graphical user interface (GUI), and runs on a Linux-based operating system. It comes installed with 40 applications, including Web Mail, Internet Radio, OpenOffice, built-in dictionary, media player and photo manager. It also features 14 voice-activated commands. Files made from this device are fully compatible with applications of other operating systems.

The .92-kilogram white device, which is priced way too low compared with high-end notebooks or subnotebooks in the market today, is also part of the company's thrust to bring the technology to sectors of society often left behind and marginalized by the digitalized world.

Intel Philippines business solution manager Carlos Subido said the device will help in democratizing technology, and also serve as a learning tool for children.

"Intel and Asus has been working together to make sure that children and the masses can have access to new technology and the Internet," Subido said.

Securing network from internal and external threats

By Raquel P. Gomez

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE HIGHLY portable USB data storage devices such as flash drives, whose capacity to store more data is growing exponentially by the day, is great news to people who want convenience in moving and carrying data.

However, this convenience could really spell trouble for a company which handles critical data such as private customer details or other important information, according to Vic Ciencia, manager for systems engineering of Symantec.

Ciencia boosts this troubling scenario with a question: "Imagine the amount and type of information that can be leaked out or stolen by an employee of a bank, credit card company, call center or a telecommunications company via this small USB device."

Symantec, the Cupertino, California-based company popular for its Norton anti-virus software and a host of network infrastructure management and security software, has launched a product integrated with the essential security technologies that will not only secure the company's network from external threats, but also from internal threats similar to the scenario described by Ciencia.

Symantec Endpoint Protection 11.0 with Symantec AntiVirus through its device control feature can secure the ports in the computer, such as the USB port, to allow the type of peripherals that can be connected to the computer. It locks down endpoints in the system to prevent connections from thumb drives, CD burners, and other USB devices.

The device control is intelligent enough to be able to determine and allow USB devices that may have certain important functions, like a USB mouse or a USB keyboard, as well as to allow only upload of files from a USB storage device, but not to allow the saving or copying of files in the other direction.

Eric Ho, Symantec's vice president for the South Asia Region, says the landscape for network threats has been changing and evolving dramatically in the past years, with external threats such as "malware" increasing in number for financial gain of the perpetrators, and internal threats that capitalize on the vulnerability of people becoming more pronounced.

"The threat is not only on the system, but from the exploitation of the vulnerability of people. People are the new perimeter. An unassuming friendly e-mail could direct an employee to a website that automatically downloads a Trojan into that person's networked computer, which eventually will be controlled by the perpetrator of that malware."

Ho says the most common sources of attacks or threats to the network system are laptops, the Internet and VPN (virtual private network) home systems. From the monitoring done by Symantec of e-mails, Ho says 80 percent of worldwide e-mails are attacked by spam, with the Philippines having the second highest percentage of e-mail spam in the Asia-Pacific and Japan.

Symantec Endpoint Protection 11.0, managed through a single console, bundles together six security technologies—anti-virus, anti-spyware, firewall, Intrusion Prevention System (IPS) for the network, device control, application control, and IPS for the host—that aims to protect the network from the different levels of entry.

Its features include a proactive behavioral-based threat scanning that protects against zero-day threats (a malware) and threats not seen before. It does host integrity checking, enforces basic levels of security and has a three-layer network security that does automatic quarantine and remediation of suspected entries.

Touch sensor system enhances LG's Viewty

THE LG-KU990 Viewty allows users to feel a slight vibration whenever they touch the screens.

LG ELECTRONICS WILL SOON INTRODUCE the touch sensor system through its LG Viewty, an upgrade of its touch screen technology where users feel a slight vibration on their fingertips whenever they operate the handset.

Touch screen technology serves as an input device for delivering signals generated on the screen to the CPU of a mobile handset.

The wide screen application contributes hugely to the popularity of the handsets' multimedia function among mobile phone users.

"LG has always been about enhancing the mobile phone experience of users," said Jeff Hong, chief executive officer of LG Electronics Philippines. "With LG Viewty's touch sensor system, users can finally enjoy the ease and convenience of touch screen technology in their mobile phones."

LG has always been at the forefront of mobile communications innovation.

In 2005, it introduced the touch keypad concept with LG Chocolate, which has so far sold over 14 million units, becoming one of the most successful products introduced by LG Mobile.

It then introduced the touch screen technology through its Prada phone, which was launched in March this year. It was heralded the most luxurious phone in the market and the most innovative in terms of design.

LG Viewty, a new 5.0 mega-pixel digital camera phone, comes with the most advanced touch screen technology. It has a sensitive screen that may be activated with a mere touch, even when the user is wearing gloves.

LG Viewty will be launched in the Philippines in January 2008.

Verzio introduces world's first 3G dual SIM handset in the country

VERZIO, A REGIONAL 3C (COMPUTING, communications, consumer electronics) brand based in Singapore, introduces the Duplii—the world's first 3G tri-band dual SIM handset in the Philippines.

Its other model, the Twinn, is the world's first EDGE/E-GPRS tri-band dual SIM handset.

Equipped with 3G and tri-band capabilities, the Duplii enables video calls and conferencing, high-speed data access and multimedia streaming, allowing users to freely roam the world and still be in touch.

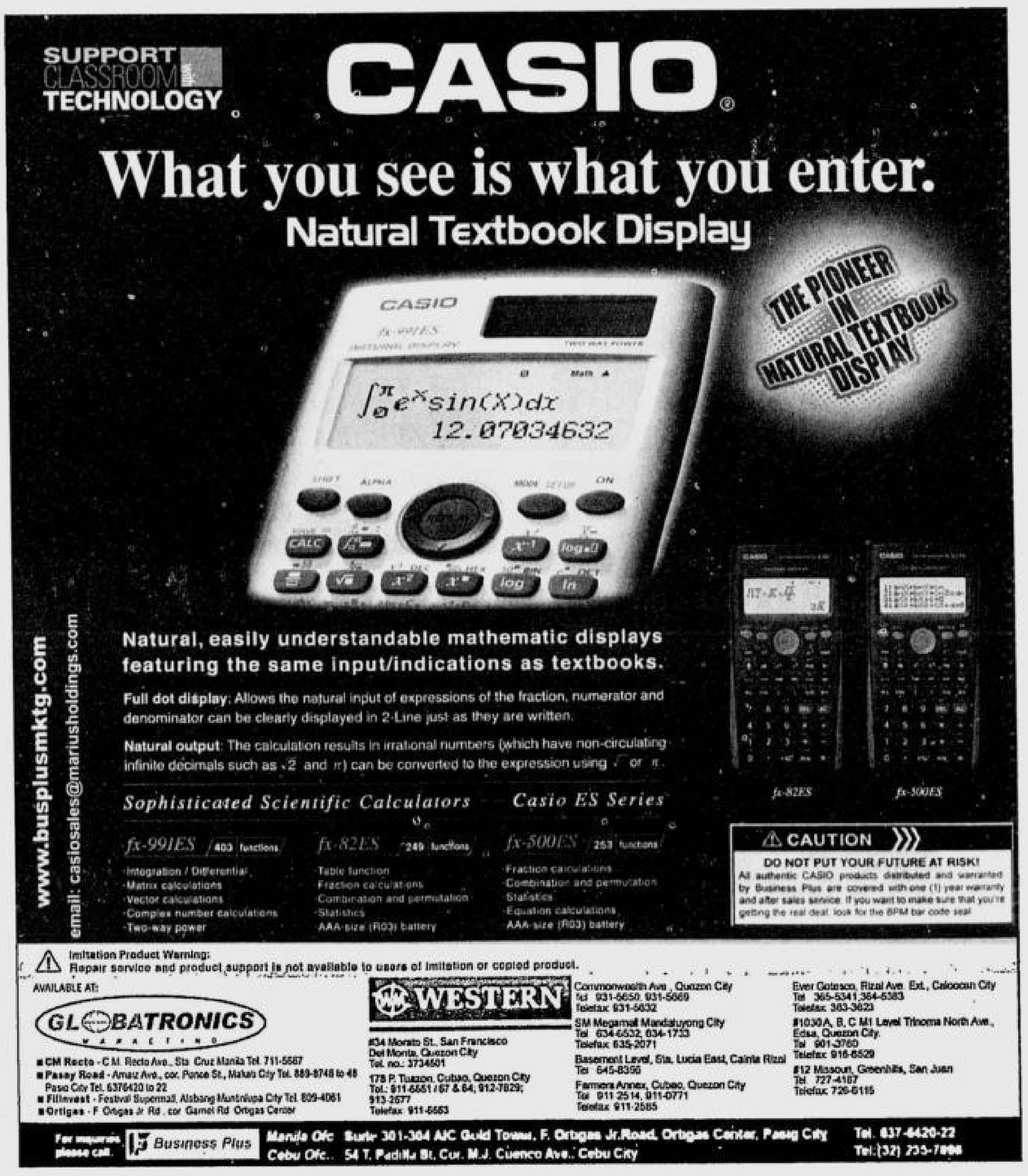
Duplii also boasts of having the combination of QualComm and Philips NXP processors, which are long-life platforms designed for minimal power consumption. It comes with an FM radio and a 2-mega-pixel camera.

Besides its EDGE/E-GPRS and tri-band features, the Twinn is the first dual SIM slider phone in the market. It is also compact in size and offers touch screen functionality. It has a real value 1.3-megapixel camera, and uses a Philips NXP processor.

Haldane's VP/GM, Chris Uyco cites that Verzio handset users can now enjoy the convenience of transferring their complete contact list via PC Sync or "send/receive all contacts" via Bluetooth. Both models can each contain 1,000 names and up to 3,000 numbers. Haldane Phils. is the authorized distributor of Verzio products, along with O2, Sony Ericsson, Canon, BenQ and Siemens in the Philippines.

Duplii and Twinn models come from the same manufacturer of the top 2 mobile phone brands. Likewise, both are registered with the National Telecommunications Commission. After-sales support will be provided by Haldane Phils. and Stanmore Distributions, Sony's distributor in the Philippines.

Verzio is the first regional 3C brand with majority interests owned by a Filipino holdings company.



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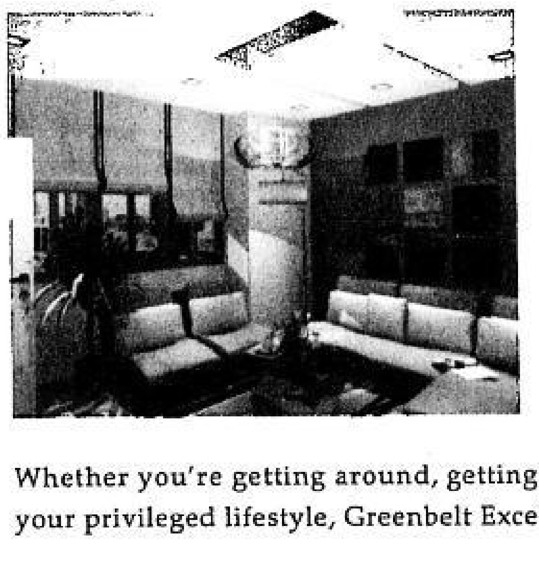

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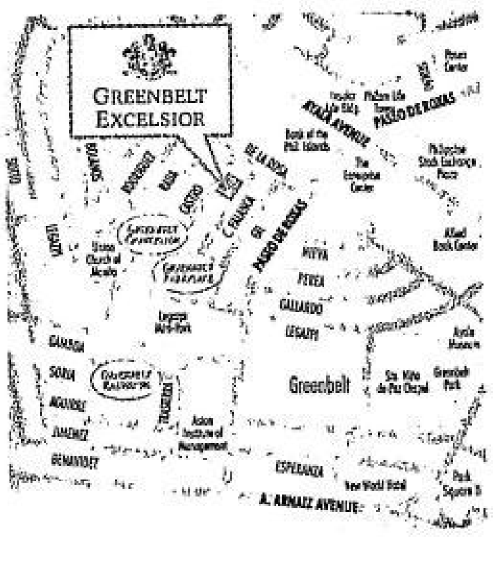
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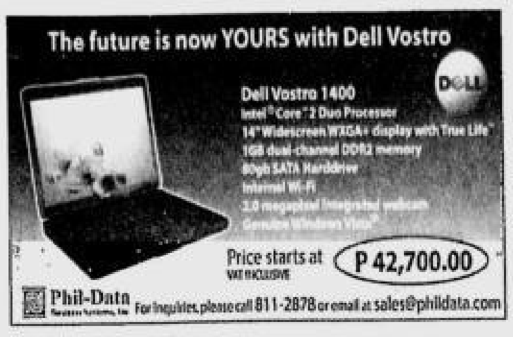
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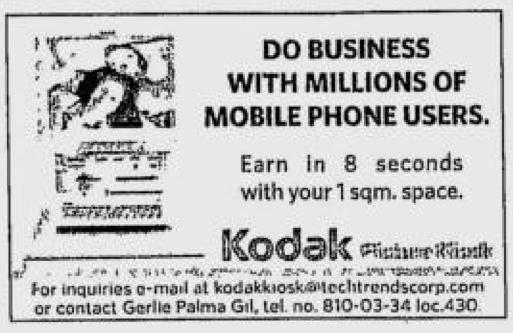
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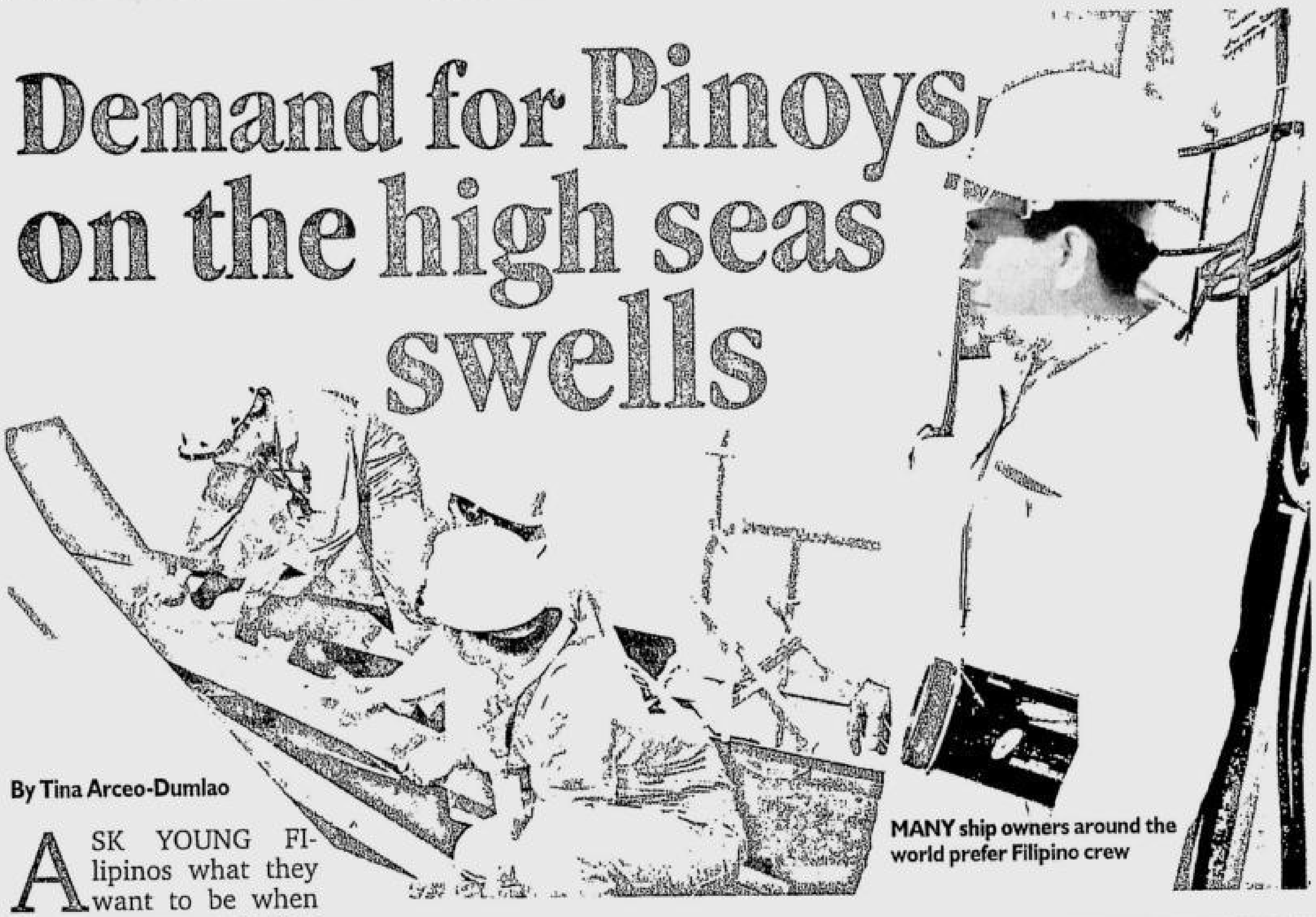
MANY ship owners around the world prefer Filipino crew

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

ASK YOUNG Filipinos what they want to be when they grow up and they will likely answer doctor, lawyer and—especially these days—nurse.

Very few will say they want to be a seafarer.

This is unfortunate, considering how Filipinos have made a name for themselves in the international shipping industry.

Ole B. Stene, managing director of Aboitiz Jebsen Bulk Transport Corp., tells the INQUIRER that Filipino seafarers are in demand abroad because of their high level of competency, fluency in English, and ability to work well with different cultures.

"Filipinos have good cultural advantages because they are used to the water and do not find it hard to live together," Stene says. "The ability to speak English is also a huge advantage."

Data from Aboitiz Jebsen, one of the country's biggest providers of Filipino seafarers abroad, showed that Filipino seafarers are the preferred choice of many ship owners in countries like Japan, Norway, Denmark, Netherlands, Germany, Greece and the United States.

Aboitiz Jebsen alone has 7,000 seafarers in its pool, and they are regularly deployed to 40 different shipping companies. They may be found on all types of ships, from cruise liners to chemical carriers and oil tankers.

The demand for Filipino seafarers will continue to grow, Stene says, because more ships are being built in different countries, and the shipping companies there will need skilled manpower, especially officers.

He estimates that as many as 8,000 ships of all types and sizes will be built until 2010, spurred largely by the growth in the world economy.

"As much as 90 to 95 percent of cargo worldwide will be transported via ships especially to China." Stene says.

This means good employment opportunities in the shipping industry for Filipinos. And it is to the Philippines' advantage that there are about 90 schools offering courses in marine engineering and marine sciences.

The challenge, thus, is to encourage more Filipinos to consider going into the marine industry and appreciate it as a wise career choice.

For one thing, seafarers enjoy good salaries with even the new hires earning more than their land-based counterparts.

Then the salary goes up steadily as they climb the ranks to become officers after about 10 years in the industry. The going rate for officers hovers at about $5,000 a month, depending on their experience and qualifications.

Seafarers are also more assured that their families are taken care of because the law requires that 80 percent of their salary is sent to their families.

Stene says Aboitiz Jebsen has set up a crewing support and family services unit to help take care of the families of its seafarers in the Philippines.

The section organizes seminars, conferences and get-together activities for the families, and provides and processes the benefits of the crewman and his family due from the company and government agencies.

It also runs a website exclusively for Aboitiz Jebsen crew to provide them and their families with another avenue for communication.

"We treat our seafarers as really a major part of our organization, not just a commodity but human capital," he says. "That is why we support them so they will feel that we are all part of the same team."

Seafarers do command a salary premium because the work is not for the faint of heart or weak of stomach.

Seafarers have to prepare themselves to be at sea for months at a time—officers sail out for an average of six months at a time, while crew members spend about 10 months out at sea.

The work can indeed be lonely and they occasionally run into foul weather and even pirates out at sea.

But with the risks come many rewards, not the least of which is a clear career path, not just at sea but on land as well.

As Stene says, leadership and people skills can be applied in land-based jobs when the seafarers say goodbye to the sea. They can train other aspiring marine officers, for instance.

This is the message that the company imparts when it recruits Filipinos to become cadets and train them to become top-quality seafarers.

As of June this year, Aboitiz Jebsen has 175 cadets in training, of which 80 percent are already licensed officers.

Stene says he hopes to keep the seafarers with the company for the long haul so they can take advantage of the continuous training on their way to becoming the type of crew and officers that have made Filipinos stand out from the rest.

There's a world of opportunity out there, he says, just waiting for Filipinos to take advantage of.

THE SHIPPING industry presents many career opportunities to Filipinos

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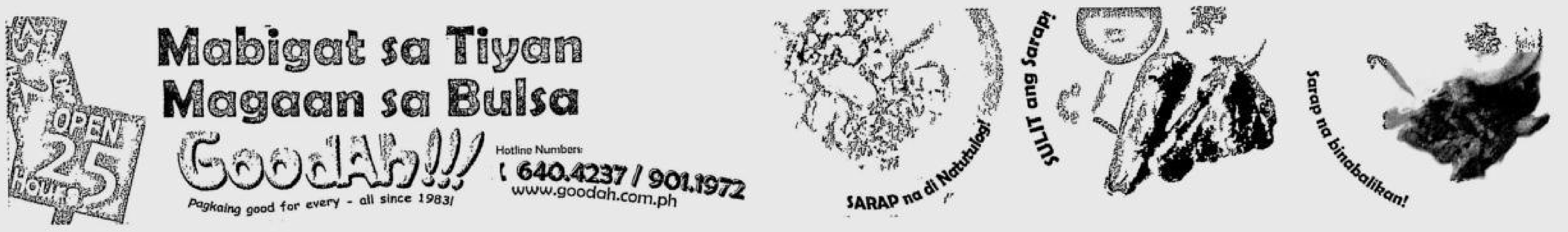
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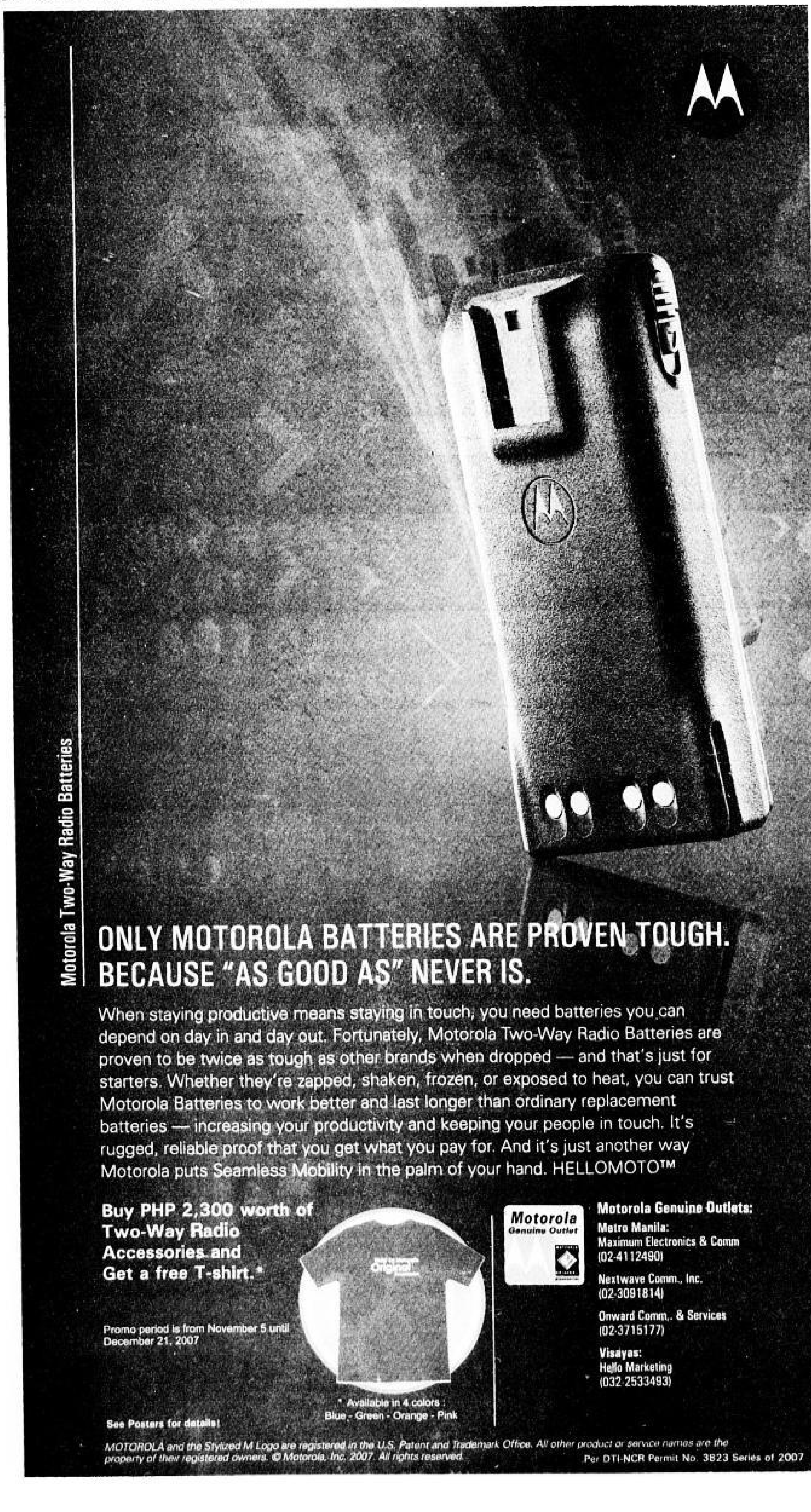

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 3823 Series of 2007

RP losing geologists, mining engineers

By Judy Quiros
Inquirer Mindanao

DAVAO CITY—THE COUNTRY'S MINING industry has been booming but how to sustain that growth is becoming a big problem, according to a group of mining engineers.

The Mindanao Association of Mining Engineers (MAEM) said there was a looming shortage of geologists and mining engineers in the country, which would eventually hamper the industry's sustainability.

"We used to advocate for the revival of the mining industry, but now that it is booming, how can we advocate for its sustainability when we are facing a big shortage in geologists and mining engineers," engineer Randy Cadiogan, MAEM boardmember, said here recently.

Cadiogan said the lack of local geologists and mining engineers has compelled mining companies to hire the services of expatriates or outsiders.

"The hiring of expatriates aims to fill the demand in the light of the booming mining industry, particularly in Mindanao and other potentially mineral-rich areas in the country, Cadiogan said.

Engineer Edilberto Arreza, officer in charge of the Mines Geosciences Bureau (MGB) in Southern Mindanao, said the shortage of geologists and mining engineers could be attributed to the dwindling number of students taking up geology and mining engineering courses.

Engineer Alex Baligod, another MAEM boardmember, said this apparent lack of interest among students to take up the two courses even led "most institutions to close these curricula."

In the city, only the University of Southern Philippines expressed interest in opening geology and mining engineering courses.

Another problem, MAEM officials said, is that many geologists and engineers are going abroad.

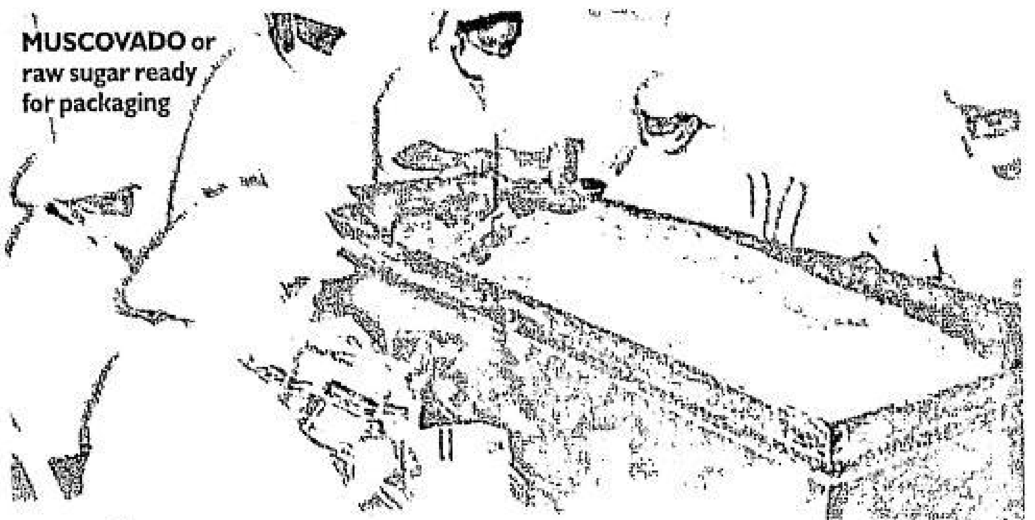
In the case of MAEM alone, 30 percent of its over 200 members are now overseas. Filipino geologists and mining engineers working in supervisory levels abroad reportedly receive as much as $3,000 or about P132,500 a month compared to about P50,000 received by those working in the local mining industry.

Engineer Luis Castillo, MAEM president, said that aside from the lack of geologists and mining engineers, the mining industry also faces a serious lack of skilled mine workers.

"Only about 10 percent can be considered skilled workers," he said.

Castillo said to remedy the situation, mining companies have developed programs to train people for technical jobs.

"With a booming mining industry, there is a need to address the problem on the lack of manpower to achieve a sustainable mining industry, Castillo said.



MUSCOVADO or raw sugar ready for packaging

Making money out of something sweet and brown

By Amy R. Remo

MUSCOVADO SUGAR COSTS ABOUT P60 a kilo in local supermarkets and a hefty P248 a kilo in European markets.

And yet, this healthy, raw brown sugar continues to struggle in terms of increasing production, gaining market access, and creating a niche particularly in health-conscious societies such as those in Europe.

In fact, according to the Philippine Development Assistance Program, muscovado production in the Philippines has been on a downturn since refined white sugar found its way on consumers' tables in the early 1900s.

"Although the trade and industry department sees a bright future for muscovado, production has been alarmingly low and decreasing in recent years as compared to refined sugar," it added.

At the recent Good News Kapihan forum, Agriculture Undersecretary for Special Concerns Bernadette Romulo-Puyat disclosed that, last year, muscovado sugar contributed a measly 0.07 percent to total exports.

"There is a demand abroad for muscovado, which is a premium product, but there is not enough supply," Puyat said.

Puyat added that muscovado is highly in demand in health conscious markets due to growing preference for an "organic lifestyle."

Currently, the country ranks 16th in the production of muscovado worldwide, while Brazil leads the pack.

With this huge, growing demand in the world market, the local muscovado industry is now in dire need of support to expand production and increase exports to lucrative markets such as Japan and Europe.

The notable lack in supply of the muscovado can be attributed to the fact that there is only a small portion of sugarcane plantations devoted to the production of this sugar.

Also, there are only a few farmers who are engaged in its production.

PDAP executive director Jerry Pacturan said that, as of 2005, production of muscovado sugar was estimated to be only at 1.5 million metric tons.

He added that the area planted to sugarcane for muscovado production is very small.

According to the Sugar Regulatory Administration's Appraisal Study 2006, muscovado production covers only 2,701 hectares, or 0.68 percent of the total 396,135 hectares planted to sugarcane.

"Also, about 60 percent of the muscovado sugar produced is exported while the rest are consumed locally," Pacturan said.

He explained that locally, muscovado is used as table sugar and as a processing ingredient in banana chips production. Some also use this sugar to preserve food in place of other additives.

Meanwhile, as of 2005, there were only 2,797 muscovado producers, which is only 5 percent of the 50,000 commercial sugar planters in the country.

PDAP lamented that, from its prominence in the 1800s, the muscovado has now receded as a backyard industry in the countryside.

Records show that muscovado is being produced in Antique, Pangasinan, Tarlac, Iloilo, Batangas, Negros Occidental, Bukidnon, Davao del Sur, Sultan Kudarat and North Cotabato.

Decades of neglect had resulted in low farm productivity, inefficient milling practices and underdeveloped marketing channels, it added.

PDAP explained that, fortunately for the industry, "growing consumer preference for natural and healthy products [in recent years] provided the opportunity long awaited by this resilient industry."

With the increasing demand for the prime commodity, Pacturan said: "We now have to make this industry work on a national level for farmers to truly benefit from it."

According to Pacturan, muscovado farmers now face several challenges in light of the muscovado boom, which they are now trying to address through the program, Promoting Rural Industries and Market Enhancement (PRIME).

He said that one of the main challenges for farmers is looking for additional lands to plant sugar, which will be processed into muscovado.

Another would be the cost of a regular muscovado mill, which is about P1.8 million.

Muscovado sugar is processed differently than ordinary white sugar since it does away with chemicals and other processing ingredients such as lime.

Pacturan added that getting certification, an important component in the export of the commodity, posed certain problems since some farmers do not see its value.

In a study entitled "Appraisal of the Muscovado Industry," PDAP proposed to expand the land area for muscovado production and to organize sugarcane farmers to ensure access to financial and technical assistance.

PDAP also suggested that production per unit land area should be increased through the adoption of good agricultural practices such as farming techniques on soil fertilization and pest and crop management.

Another critical area is ensuring product quality and expanding market access.

According to PDAP, machines and equipment should be upgraded to comply with globally acceptable HACCP standard.

Meanwhile, to promote market expansion, the development of an industry-wide marketing program is proposed, which is aimed at broadening both domestic and international markets.

Under this program, PDAP said, initiatives could include market matching for export, tapping of commercial attachés, promotions and standards formulation.

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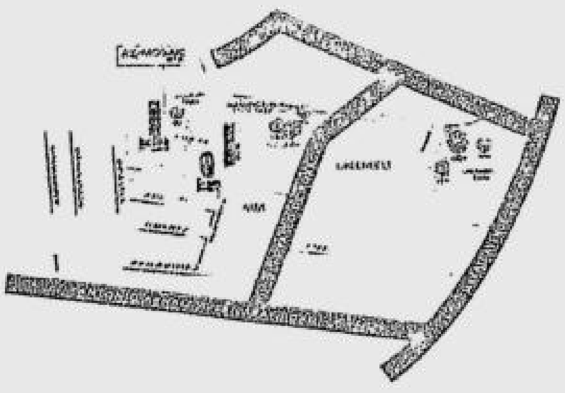

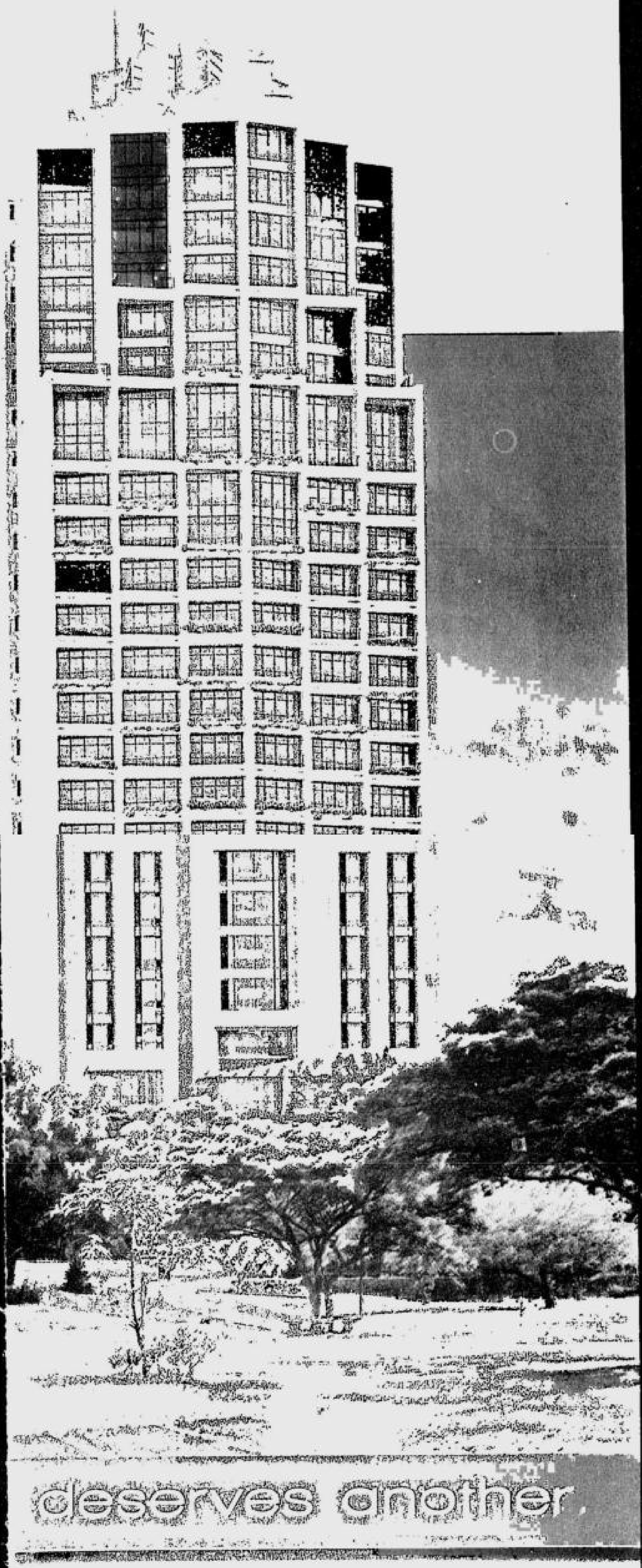

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SMART Receives Global Award For Breakthrough Mobile Ad Services

ASIA MOBILE AWARDS 07 WINNER

In a sign of the expanding role of mobile phones in the Philippine marketing scene, leading wireless services provider Smart Communications, Inc. (SMART) and its technology partner Zad Mobile, Inc. received Tuesday an innovation award for mobile advertising from the GSM Association (GSMA).

At the Mobile Asia Congress recently held in Macau, China, the "1-in-5 Panalo" promo that SMART had recently implemented for the global cola brand Pepsi was awarded Best Mobile Advertising in the GSMA's inaugural Asia Mobile Awards 2007.

The mobile multimedia platform Mercury™, developed by another SMART technology partner, Netherlands-based 3ple-Media, was also awarded by the GSMA as the Most Innovative Carrier Infrastructure, another category in the association's Asia Mobile Innovation Awards.

Third for SMART

The GSMA is the global trade association for mobile operators, and its citations are considered the Oscars of the mobile communications industry.

Done together with US-based Zad Mobile, the Pepsi promo was one of the most successful promo campaigns for the cola brand, and put the country in the international spotlight as an emerging hotbed for mobile advertising in Asia.

"We are of course very happy and deeply honored, and we thank the GSMA for this award – the third from the GSMA for SMART after SMART *Money* and SMART *Load*," said SMART president and CEO Napoleon L. Nazareno.

"This international award highlights the huge potential for innovation that mobile phones offer to the advertising community in the Philippines," said Danilo J. Mojica, SMART's head for Wireless Consumer Division.

"This year's Asian Mobile Awards recognize the sheer pace of progress that's been made right across the region's mobile communication market. Our congratulations to SMART and our thanks to everyone who participated," said Rob Conway, CEO of the GSM Association.

Global, award-winning technologies

With mobile advertising predicted to explode into a billion-dollar global industry in just a few years, SMART had partnered with Zad Mobile and 3ple-Media and invested in award-winning, state-of-the-art systems that are expected to drive the company's mobile advertising efforts. SMART's moves are geared toward jumpstarting the development of mobile advertising in the country.

From 3ple-Media, SMART had acquired Mercury™, a fast, robust, and high-performing technology that allows the cellular operator to harness the richness of multimedia messaging as a compelling tool in the delivery of mobile ads.

Through the Zad Mobile Advertising Platform (ZMAP), SMART subscribers will receive only the ads that are meaningful, relevant, and interesting to them. It provides value and incentives in exchange for their participation. Most importantly, it assures subscribers of privacy and complete control over the choice whether to receive advertisements or not.

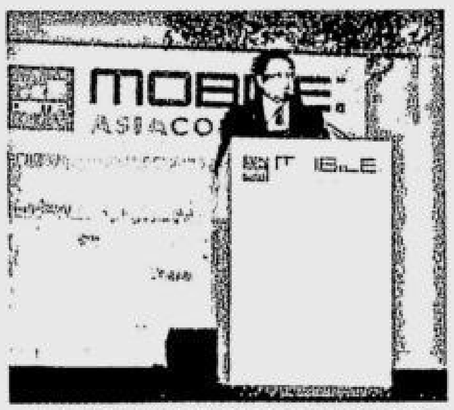
Offering convergence and synergy

To advertisers, what this means is a much greater depth of consumer engagement via the mobile phone – a very personal device to more than 50 million actively subscribed mobile users in the Philippines – *enabling them to talk to the right people in the right way.*

"Operators and advertisers worldwide are taking a closer look at mobile advertising and SMART intends to lead in this area", Nazareno said., "Given SMART's leading position, we will provide the advertising community new tools that can complement very well campaigns implemented in the traditional media. At the same time, we will put in place policies that protect first and foremost the interests of our subscribers."

Officers of Conexus Mobile Alliance, one of the largest mobile alliances in Asia, launched Asia's first-ever pay-per-day data roaming flat-rate tariff plan at the GSMA event in Macau. Fifth from left is Ramoncito S. Fernandez, head of SMART's Administration and Materials Management Division.

Shown in photo are (L-R) Nick Wiggin, Zad Mobile's VP for Media and Advertising; Vijay Sundaram, Zad Mobile's COO; Vinchi Cuyegkeng, SMART's Mobile Marketing Manager; Regina Moore, Zad Mobile's VP for Marketing; and Danilo J. Mojica, head of SMART's Wireless Consumer Division.


Manuel V. Pangilinan, Chairman and CEO of the PLDT Group, SMART's parent company, spoke on increasing profitability though managed convergence at the GSMA Mobile Asia Congress.

Shown in photo taken during the GSMA awarding rites are (L-R) Vijay Sundaram, COO of Zad Mobile; Danilo J. Mojica, head of SMART's Wireless Consumer Division; Bill Gajda, Chief Commercial & Marketing Officer of GSMA; and Taiwanese actor David Wu, who hosted the evening's affair.

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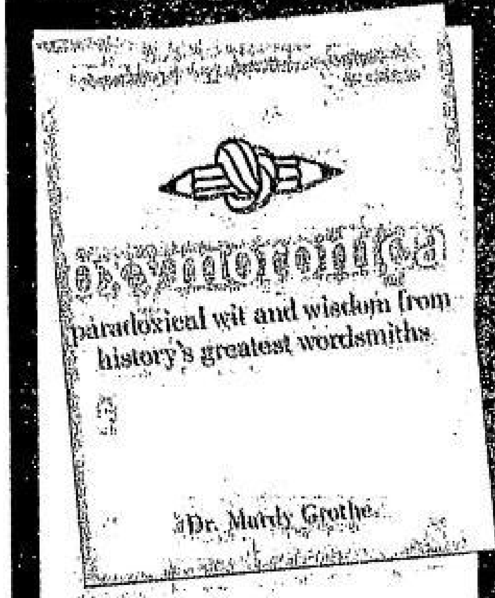

oxymoronica
paradoxical wit and wisdom from history's greatest wordsmiths
Dr. Mardy Grothe

EXECUTIVE READ

"Oxymoronica"
By Mardy Grothe
Harper Resource, 2004

By Dante M. Velasco
Contributor

IF YOU ARE EXASPERATED BY the forked tongue of our politicians who pass off a "bribe" as a "gift"; or if you can not make sense of a pardoned man not owning up to the crime he was pardoned of, just think of the truth that has come down to us from our forefathers: We live in the midst of contradictions—some good, mostly bad.

Before you get a heart attack, or before you give up on our only country, read this book with a title that is not yet included in the English dictionary: "Oxymoronica."

You've heard Charles Schulz speaking through the cartoon "Peanuts" when a character said: "I love mankind—it's people I can't stand." Or, a refreshing quote from Robert Burton: "A woman smells best when she hath no perfume at all." What about this related quote from Lady Weindermer, which speaks volumes of truth? "I can resist everything except temptation"?

What about this quote from Alfred Smith that dismisses any suggestion of a strongman rule once we get tired of the chaos of democracy: "All the ills of democracy can be cured by more democracy.

These are samplers of oxymoronica, which Mardy Grothe, PhD. describes as "a collection of quotations that contain incompatible and incongruous elements."

Profoundly true

They appear illogical or self-contradictory on the surface but, on a deeper level, they usually make a great deal of sense and are often profoundly true, he adds.

Oxymoronica actually is a take-off from "oxymoron."

Oxymoron comes from the Greek word "oxus," meaning sharp or pointed; and from another word "moros," meaning dull, stupid or foolish.

Thus, an oxymoron is sharp dullness or pointed foolishness.

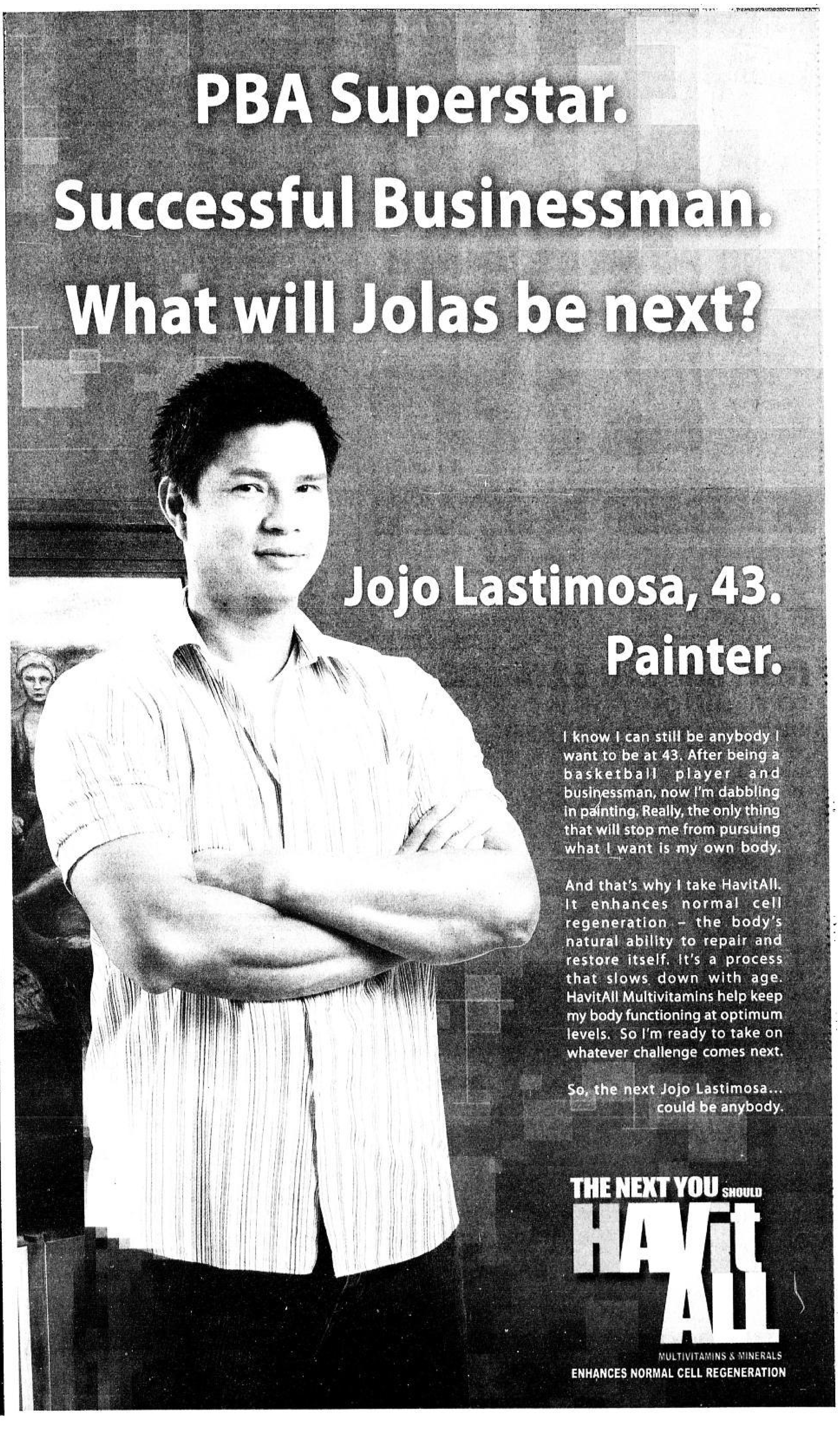
It is usually known only as "a contradiction in terms," but it is also about "a contradiction in ideas."

In the area of married or family life, this book offers a lot of quotes that speak the truth in an astonishing way.

An example is this saying by Anton Checkov: "If you are afraid of loneliness, don't marry. It delivers one truth: The worst kind of loneliness comes to people who' are, technically, not alone.

Sometimes we call this a paradox, but the author offers oxymoronica as its substitute. This quote has been rephrased and re-

LEARN/B3-3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So, the next Jojo Lastimosa...
could be anybody.

Business opportunities: Medical tourism

MAPPING THE FUTURE

Alma Rita R. Jimenez

I NOTE WITH PLEASURE THAT THE healthcare industry is finally being seen as a potentially lucrative investment proposition.

Over the years, economic improvements tremendously enhanced the lifestyle and health of the world's population.

According to a Pricewaterhouse Coopers study, 24 OECD countries spent $2.7 trillion on healthcare in 2002. The same study estimated that if this increasing trend in spending continues, the 2002 level will more than triple to $10 billion by 2020.

Meanwhile, dramatic changes in demographics are unfolding. Within the next two decades, the global population aged 65 and over will grow by an astonishing 88 percent, or almost a million people a month.

Back in 2000, 7 percent of the world population (or 420 million people) were over the age of 65. This is projected to double in 2025, when people over 65 will make up 10 percent of the world population (or a total of 800 million people).

These two developments are interrelated. As the population ages, there is more demand for healthcare which in turn, drives the cost of healthcare spending higher.

For every dollar, or yen or pound spent on healthcare, this means one less spent on computers, travel and other personal/consumable items.

While health expenditures increase with growth, reducing these expenditures may be a key factor to fuel economic growth.

Dilemma

Therein lies the dilemma for developed countries. How can they continue to sustain their health systems while battling with the double whammy of rising healthcare cost and aging population?

Globalization offered a solution.

For years, a global convergence in healthcare continues to unfold and already, it has radically altered the way this is managed and delivered.

From its early precursor of pharmaceutical companies who sought to broaden their market base by establishing global partnerships as a means of expanding their market reach, we now see a variety of global solutions employed to solve many local health problems.

The first to ride this wave is the Philippines. Our nurses were among and still the most aggressively recruited staff as many countries experience shortages of skilled health personnel.

Today, delivering the best healthcare is no longer defined by national boundaries.

It is not uncommon now for US physicians to receive training in foreign medical schools. Public private partnerships are making possible the establishment of new hospitals and clinics in more than 50 countries like Brazil, Gulf States, Sweden, Australia, Malaysia and UAE.

The already huge global expenditure for healthcare does not show signs of abating.

Countries are competing for the chance to serve the growing market—and Philippines is one of them.

What business opportunities have emerged or are emerging where Philippines can potentially compete in? These four areas show a lot of promise:

- Medical travel/tourism
- Retirement destination
- Outsourcing opportunities
- Health human resource provider

Medical Tourism

Lauren Garret wrote: "In the newly globalized economy of the 21st century, no part of the planet is too remote, too exotic or too forbidding for travelers or business development."

This is truly opening up the global market for travel in pursuit of health and wellness.

Medical travel is now an attractive alternative to take advantage of health services that would normally be too expensive or too inaccessible because of long waiting lines in a patient's country of origin.

Services sought range from the simple ones like spa and wellness, dermatological services, aesthetic surgeries, executive checkups and dental makeovers to the more complex ones like hip replacement and organ transplants.

Success stories keep getting repeated in various publications and on the Internet.

Among Asean countries, the early mover was Singapore, which is still working hard to increase its 200,000 tourists a year to a million by 2012 pushing the sector's GDP contribution above $1.6 billion.

Thailand is a serious competitor and has recorded at least 600,000 patients' arrivals a year. This year alone, it is expecting to earn more than $1 billion.

Malaysia, which treated more than a hundred thousand tourist-patients in 2005, is expecting to make $590 million in five years. India's medical tourism business is growing at the rate of 30 percent a year and projected to make at least $2.2 billion a year by 2012.

Let us not forget that these four countries expect to generate more than $4.4 billion by 2012. That is a lot of money for their economies.

The increase in medical tourism market has already overtaken the 4-6- percent growth in general travel bookings predicted for 2006 with the number of medical travelers swelling by 20-30 percent a year. The Philippines is moving to join the bandwagon.

Philippines is a natural for medical travel. Already, we are among the preferred tourist destinations with our amazing beaches, tropical weather, historical landmarks, golf courses and hospitality among many other enticements that tourists find attractive.

On the service delivery side, we have very competent doctors practicing in well-equipped hospitals. We are already a recognized global brand in healthcare and chances are, these tourists have been cared for by either Filipino nurses or doctors in their own countries.

We speak English fluently and what we lack in resources, we make up with our smiles and trademark hospitality. Surely we can give our competitors a run for their money.

An effort is also being made to enable the local players to enter the market. The DOT conceptualized the Philippine Medical Tourism Program in accordance with its mandate to promote and develop tourism as a major socioeconomic activity to generate foreign exchange and employment.

Other agencies likewise supported the initiative among them, the Board of Investments, which included medical tourism in the 2007 Investment Priority Plan, the Development Bank of the Philippines through its Health and Wellness Enhancement Access Loan Program and the Philippine Export Zone Authority through the establishment of medical tourism zones.

BOI, DBP and Peza had already issued guidelines on how these incentives can be enjoyed by those desiring to invest in medical tourism activities.

Retirement

From a short stay medical travel, we move to a more long-term opportunity for the Philippines as a retirement destination and as a service provider for geriatric care. We are living in a graying world and projections show just how challenging this will be for the planet.

The current estimated over-65 population in US is roughly 13 percent of the total population or about 35 million persons. By 2025, this age group is expected to be almost 63 million, nearly 19 percent of the total population.

Aging population

In Europe, one in five Europeans will be more than 65 years old by year 2025. In Asia-Southeast Asian region, Japan will have the most number of elderly population.

A paper by Misako Ito revealed that the elderly population aged 65 years and older reached 25.33 million in 2005—one out of every five people is at least 65 years of age.

Between 2000 and 2025, China's 65+ population will grow by 3.5 percent per year while its under-15 population will decrease by 25 percent. By 2015, the percentage of the 65+ population will reach 9 percent in China and Thailand; 10 percent in South Korea; 11 percent in Taiwan; and 15 percent in Hong Kong.

In 1985, children under 15 outnumbered people aged 65 and older by 5 to 1 in East Asia and 10 to 1 in Southeast Asia. These ratios will plummet to 2 to 1 and 4 to 1 respectively, by 2015.

Baby boomers

Why is there so much concern about the aging of the population especially in developed countries?

Two or three decades ago, the baby boomers were active members of the workforce and their contribution to the social fund is enough to support those who were retiring—a much smaller number in relation to the younger ones.

Today, the baby boomers are themselves about to retire—and the deceleration of population growth has considerably reduced the number of younger age group who should be taking over their place in the hierarchy to continue providing support through pension fund contribution.

Countries now face an inverted pyramid scenario with funding support diminishing while retiring employees are increasing, straining its ability to take care of their elderlies.

Governments are now forced to consider alternatives to maximize the depleting pension funds and "outsourcing" may show them the way out: Scout for locations where their retirees can avail of appropriate and affordable housing, enjoy greater independence and better quality of life—and all within their pension allotment.

The growing popularity of medical tourism is hastening the "buy-in" for the "relocation" of retirement facilities in countries that will have the resources to build such communities and provide the required services that will support the needs of its residents.

Again, Philippines is presenting itself as an ideal second home for the growing retirement market. The cost of living is relatively low (at least, when you consider that foreign retirees will get more pesos for their dollars or euros) and the climate is pleasant and conducive to a more laid-back lifestyle.

The availability of healthcare services is also a major selling point. Retirees are in that age bracket where health worries abound and the presence of many health facilities is a competitive advantage.

The business imperative is to develop and implement a world-class retirement community that will be able to combine the best features in terms of physical infrastructure and use this to create a seamless yet flexible network of health and lifestyle services that will be in step with the age transitions of its senior residents from active to increasingly bed-bound condition.

Outsourcing opportunities

Another area that the Philippines can also explore is outsourcing engagements such as support services for healthcare.

Many disease management programs abroad make use of the services of call centers for monitoring and follow-ups. Our country is already a call center hub—we can extend the service coverage to include healthcare. Medical transcription is already an accepted outsourcing area and we can likewise capitalize on the English proficiency of our manpower to further increase the market.

In the health education sector, we are already linked with countries like Korea and China, which are sending their students for nursing degrees.

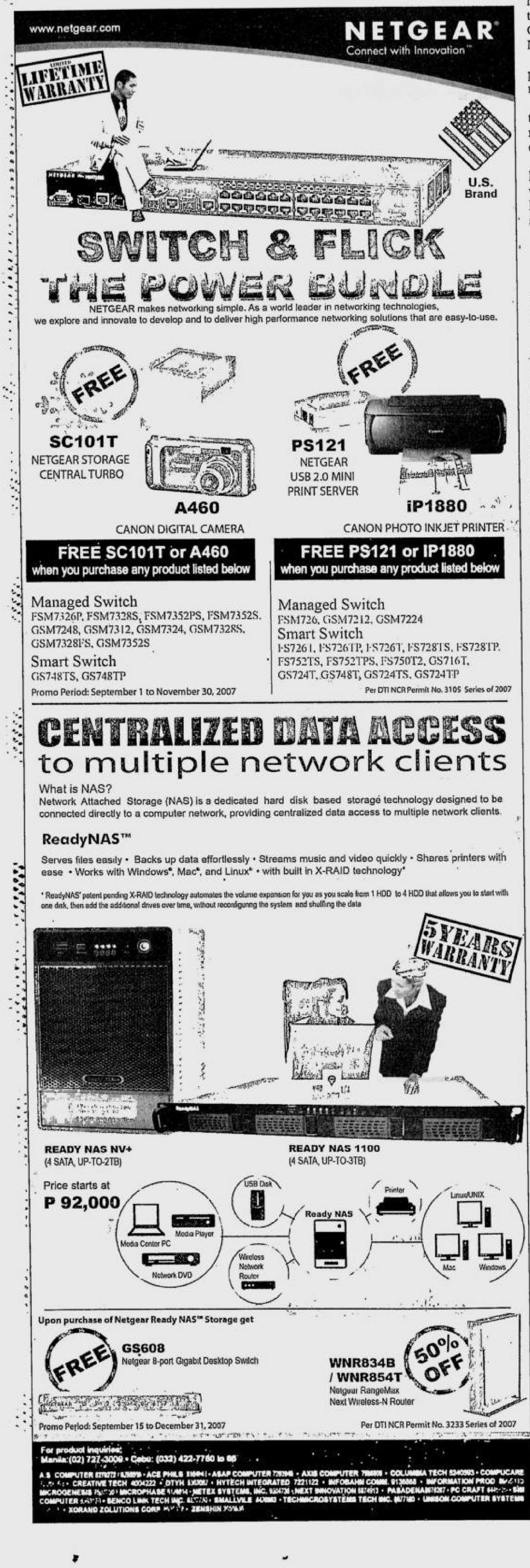
Health human resource provider

All three preceding business opportunities require foreign nationals to come to our country to avail themselves of those services. Not all will be comfortable taking this route though because of strong family and cultural ties. Why not reverse the process and explore the opportunity of having our services made available to other countries on a fixed period/rotation basis?

One of the major worries of countries employing staff from overseas is that eventually, they will become citizens with all the entitlements. This, to their view, will strain further their already shrinking social services budget.

The "rotation model" will allow us to deploy staff in a host country where they

BUSINESS/ B3-3



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Our main market is the workplace-based and experience-driven students with a minimum of 2 years work experience. We have a learning environment where 30% of our students can be considered international in experience. Adding to this global experience is the fact that 30% of our professors have global work experiences.

Our faculty are all workplace-based and experience-driven with an average work experience of 20 years and majority are in senior management positions. Aside from their relevant academic credentials, they undergo rigorous training in the different facets of their academic work and in their specific areas of specialization.

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- a learner-centered method of delivery facilitated by workplace-based professors.

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We have produced a total of about 4,500 MBA graduates most of whom have reached senior management positions in their work. The AGSB has produced a Philippine president, several cabinet secretaries and leaders of industries, both here and in the region.

The AGSB has been ranked Number 1, garnering an average rating of 4.6 out of a possible perfect score of 5.0 based on a comprehensive study of 199 MBA programs in the country by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the Fund for Assistance to Private Education (FAPE). The AGSB has likewise been a recipient of the Thomas Kennedy award given by New Ventures of Regis University for delivering an excellent accelerated MBA program. Its MBA in Health Program, specifically the Leaders for Health Program was the recipient of the People Power People award by the Benigno Aquino Foundation.

These are just some of the unique features of our graduate school of business.

MORE PATIENTS are going abroad to save on the cost of treatments.

The Philippines can position itself as an ideal retirement destination

Business opportunities ...

From page B3-2

will work for one to two years then come back to the Philippines who will then send a new batch as replacement. Rotation in the form of fixed employment period will minimize the adverse effects of migration such as shortage of skills for our own health system requirements and the social consequences of family separations.

At the same time, the skills that will be learned from the host country can improve the quality of our healthcare delivery at home. It's a win-win situation and the host countries can continue enjoying the benefits of well-staffed health facilities.

The bottom line is that healthcare is creating new market spaces and is opening up new doors where investments can come in, among them in these two major areas:

1. Infrastructure
   - Putting up more health and wellness facilities that are geographically dispersed over regions already considered as tourist destinations from spas, specialty clinics to hospitals;
   - Expansion of tourist accommodation facilities such as hotels, inns, etc.
   - Establishment of retirement communities including long-term care facilities
2. Services
   - Operation of transportation facilities
   - Schools and other facilities for health human resource development and workforce retraining
   - Operation of boutique travel agencies that cater to this specialized market
   - Operation of companies that can provide telemedicine services
   - Operation of lifestyle service companies to provide support services

Now is the time to take advantage of opportunities. Through the joint efforts of agencies such as DTI, BOI, Peza, DOT and DOH, investing in health and wellness initiatives are made more attractive through incentives ranging from income tax holidays to tax exemptions on customs duties ad importation.

In fact, our hospital, St. Frances Cabrini Medical Center has been recently proclaimed by the President of the Philippines as the first Medical Tourism Special Economic Zone—and our hospital has likewise been approved as the first enterprise-locator in this special medical zone.

Growing market

How then can the Philippines penetrate and seize leadership of the growing market in healthcare?

First, we need an engaged travel and tourism industry fully cognizant that medical tourism is a new game where old rules may not apply.

There is a need, therefore, for new synergies, a retraining of workforce and learning new skills that will allow proper handling of patients' inquiries, complaints and condition.

Second, we need to go beyond great slogans and classy brochures to translate every healthcare service requirement into an excellent experience for the medical travelers from the time of arrival till their exit.

The process flow must be seamless and hassle-free. This means better airport facilities, better coordination between and among government, health facilities and support services.

Third, we must establish track record through consistent performance and delivery. Quality must be a top priority.

It has been said that the healthcare system of the 21st century is a public-private partnership that harnesses the creative impulses of the private sector with the social justice function of the public sector. A public-private partnership has the potential of combining the innovations of the competitive marketplace with the larger social values of solidarity and health justice.

Countries who have successfully positioned themselves in this robust healthcare market leveraging on this partnership went on to reap economic benefits.

The Philippines can likewise become a beneficiary of this niche market.

Beyond profitability, the dollar earning potential of this market offers a unique opportunity to ensure that the gains will redound to the benefit of our countrymen who have poor access to quality healthcare.

The most tangible manifestation will be seen in a bigger budget allocation for health to upgrade and expand public health facilities ensuring equitable access to quality health services.

With the patronage and business from our international partners and clients, we can make this happen.

Healthcare has succeeded in breaking down barriers and making this planet an increasingly borderless world—because we all realize that at the end of the day, caring, healing, empathy and alleviation of pain recognizes neither color, money, country nor race.

So, expect tourists to go home from their travels bringing not only a couple of Batangas *balisong*, Cebu keychains or Boracay shirts but also a new hip or yes, a brand new face.

(The article reflects the personal opinion of the author and does not reflect the official stand of the Management Association of the Philippines. Based on a speech delivered by the author at the recent Joint Meeting of Philippine-Japan Economic Cooperation Committee. The author is president & CEO of Health Solutions Corp. and St. Frances Cabrini Medical Center. Feedback at <mapsec@globenet.com.ph>.)

Learn from and enjoy ...

From page B3-1

vised but tells us something to really think about: Oscar Wilde said: "There are only two tragedies in this life. One is not getting what one wants and the other is getting it."

This has been told and retold, but the latest is: "Beware of what you wish for because you may get it." Simply put, getting what we want is not necessarily the best for us.

"One is to lose your heart's desire. The other is to gain it.—George Bernard Shaw

This quote is not in this book but is in the Book of books: "He who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

In the area of the arts and show business, the book offers a treasure of collections. Begin with what Charles Chaplin said: "What a sad business is being funny!" It sounds like a contradiction, but when you think deeply about the "sadness of a clown," you would comprehend a deeper truth.

On the other hand, Ad Reinhardt has a paradox: "Art is too serious to be taken seriously"—meaning, you can only create art if you have fun.

It's like a good drive in golf, if I may say so: You can only be firm with your grip if you loosen it upon impact on the ball.

This one can be a quote fit as a gift to the Press Secretary, all in the spirit of fun. Noel Coward said: "I can take any amount of criticism, so long as it is unqualified praise."

These two quotes can actually come across as euphemism. These sayings have charm: "I wasn't really naked. I simply didn't have any clothes on" (Josephine Baker). "They were never defeated, they were killed." (French belief on the fate of their foreign legion).

This book also has a collection of devastating insults. An anonymous author said: "Deep down, he's shallow." There is also a wealth of social commentary in these quotes. Who could argue with Charles Maurice de Talleyrand who said: "Never speak ill of yourself! You can count on your friends for that." Mark Twain, ever alert to the perversities of human nature, according to the author, said: "It takes your enemy and friend, working together, to hurt you to the heart; the one to slander you and the other to get the news to you."

One brilliant moment in our history was when Vicente Paterno fell asleep during the speech of former strongman Ferdinand Marcos. He was told that he was not doing anything. His reply: "Dozing off in a speech is a statement." G. K. Chesterton said it differently: "A yawn is the loudest shout."

Most fun in the book are what the author called "inadvertent oymoronica"—where the speaker is not even aware of his verbal gaffes. A sampler: A church bulletin said: "The cost for attending the Fasting and Prayer Conference includes meals." What!

Samuel Goldwyn, meanwhile, said: "If I could drop dead right now, I'd be the happiest man alive."

His equal is Yogi Berra, who said: "It's tough to make predictions, especially about the future."

Verbal blunders abound among Americans who should know the English language better.

Former President Gerald Ford once said: "If Lincoln were alive today, he'd roll over in his grave." Oh yes, the book has a lot of blunders from George W. Bush and Dan Quayle.

Oxymoronica is a book that will sharpen your ears and eyes to the contradictions in people's lives and actions. And yet it also tells us that the truths about ourselves are not as clear-cut as we wish them to be.

They come as oxymorons. Upon reading this book, you won't readily say that a person is contradicting himself. He may be saying a powerful truth. *(dantemvelasco@yahoo.com)*

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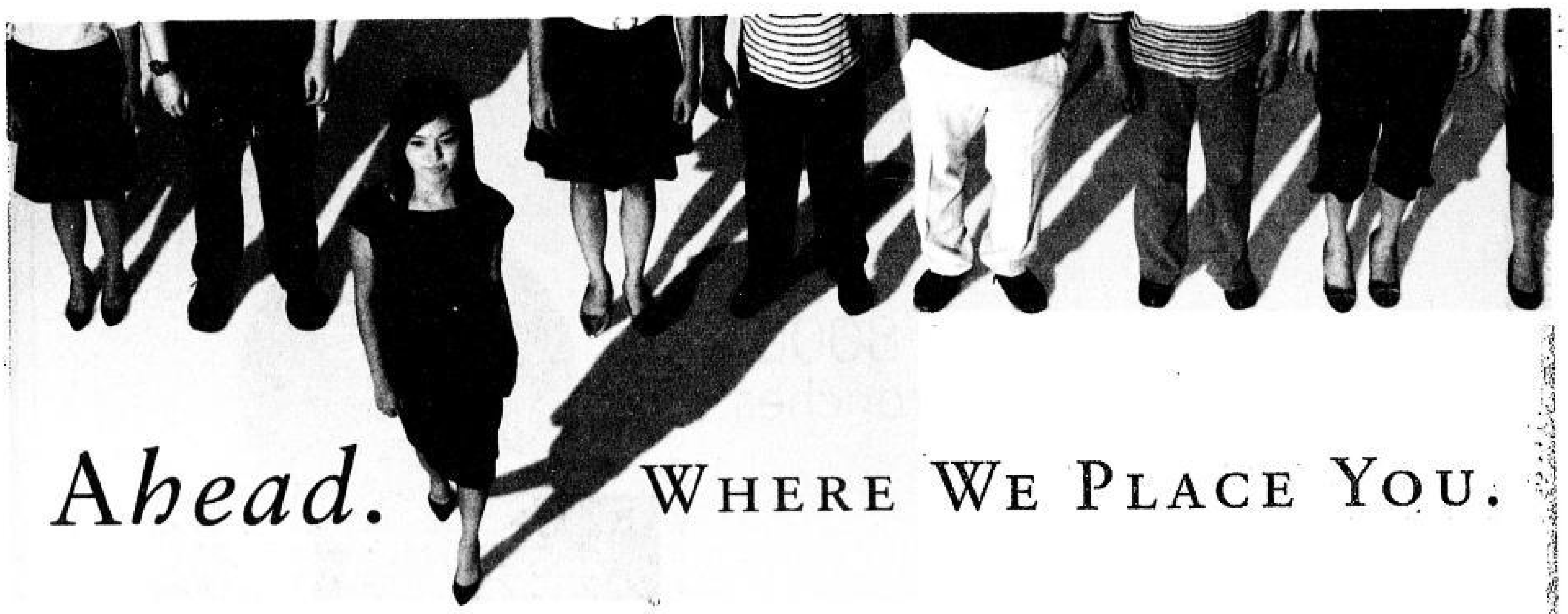

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"More than Just Sand, Surf and Shopping: Opportunities for the Philippines in Medical Tourism"
Mr. Robert F. Kuan, Chairman of the Board, St. Luke's Medical Center

Medical bills in the U.S. and Europe have risen so high that it now has become cheaper for westerners to fly to the East to seek medical care. Medical tourism has thus become one of the fastest growing global industries. With its pool of highly-trained medical practitioners and worldwide reputation for excellence in patient care, the Philippines is well-positioned to tap this global market opportunity. Find out how St. Luke's Medical Center has taken advantage of the worldwide surge in medical tourism, and how its dynamic Chairman, the legendary founder of the Chowking food chain, has spearheaded its drive to become a top-rated medical facility not just in the Philippines, but in the region.

"Best Practices and Opportunities in Online Advertising"
Ms. Rosalind Tan, Senior Sales Manager, Yahoo! Southeast Asia

Marketing messages are everywhere, flooding all the available media, including the internet. Many have tried to tap the online market with limited success. If not done well, your message can get drowned out by the heavy volume of online noise. The rapid convergence of internet services and interfaces has increased the challenges of maximizing opportunities in online advertising. But when done well, the rewards remain great. Find out how Ms. Rosalind Tan, Senior Sales Manager of Yahoo! Southeast Asia has steered Yahoo! to develop tailor-made, interactive solutions for its regional clients, including Nokia, Sony Ericsson, Samsung, HSBC and DBS; and find out how you, too, can successfully tap the young, wealthy and well-educated market that has gone increasingly online.

"Non-Traditional Ways of Reaching Your Target Segments"
Ms. Ma. Teresa D. Villanueva, President, AdBoard of the Philippines; Chief Executive Officer, Publicis Manila

With so many brands talking, how do you know if your customers are listening? Ms. Matec Villanueva holds the reins at Publicis Manila, the country's largest advertising agency, and shares with us her tips for laser-sharp targeting: making sure that our message does not just stand out in an increasingly congested marketplace, but that it also finds its way into the arms and ears of the market for which it was intended.

"The Fast and the Furious: Pushing Push-Button Digital Entertainment"
Mr. Jay Paolo de Leon Adevoso, Country Manager, LaNetro Zed Philippines

After "instant", "real time" has become the new standard for digital entertainment and community products. Nonstop innovation and media integration have brought mobile and internet services—from games and sounds to videos and blogs—to the next level. Discover how Mr. Jay Paolo Adevoso, Country Manager of LaNetro Zed Philippines, has developed local business for the global mobile network and how he has steered the company to become a high-growth Php1 billion revenue organization. Find out how the wireless community can be a lucrative new market for your company, or how you can use wireless technology to more creatively and cost-effectively reach your existing ones.

"Using Network Marketing as a Blue Ocean Strategy"
Mr. Josiah Go, President and CEO, Waters Philippines

Rather than the traditional audience of end-buyers, successful network marketing entails finding the right people to represent your company and your products. Companies can develop strong, profitable niches by creating a network of sellers, whether they be full-time or part-time, without having to spend on mass media. Find out how you can apply network marketing as a Blue Ocean Strategy through best-selling author Josiah Go, President and CEO of Waters Philippines and one of the most successful practitioners of network marketing in the Philippines. Josiah, who has held the position of Chairman of the Direct Selling Association as well as National President of the Philippine Marketing Association, is also the country's only qualified facilator of the Blue Ocean Strategy from the Blue Ocean Strategy Institute, Insead, France.

"Helping Overseas Filipinos Find Their Way Home: Marketing Real Estate to Overseas Filipinos"
Mr. Rex Ma. A Mendoza, Chairman, Ayala Land International Sales, Inc. and President, Ayala Land Sales, Inc

The current boom in real estate is now currently attributed to overseas Filipinos who are investing their hard-earned money in the land of their birth. From condominiums to weekend homes, new houses to retirement communities, the opportunities for growth in real estate are booming, and Filipinos abroad have become a major market. Ayala Land is a key driver behind this boom, with its diverse product portfolio and its seasoned and well-travelled marketing team. Get insights on tapping the global Filipino from Rex Mendoza, the key executive leading Ayala's real estate sales and marketing efforts abroad, as he shares his experiences on successfully marketing Ayala Land's diverse projects to the Filipino diaspora.

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MONDAY ARTS & BOOKS ◎ TUESDAY

Mom, *the artist*

Elaine Ongpin-Herbosa will have her first solo exhibit at Ayala Museum

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By Mia O. Herbosa
Contributor

THEY TELL ME SAGITTARIUS women are strong, fiery and spirited. I should know, I was born of one and I gave birth to another. I'm literally sandwiched between them.

In truth, no one has ever taught me more in life than my 5-year-old daughter and my 62-year-old mother.

My mother is a strong woman. A force of nature, really, not so much physically but more in terms of energy, sheer guts, willpower, drive and determination. I have yet to meet anyone who compares. My child, Lana, is still young, but I already see traces of the divine energy.

God knows we all love our mothers. We see their image constantly evolve in our eyes—from babies who need them in every way, to little kids who idolize their words and acts, to teenagers who want nothing more but to get away from them, and then to young adults who look to them for much-needed advice.

When we become parents ourselves, their image again changes to become more three-dimensional as we relate and ponder the decisions they made at similar points in their lives.

Many a time, we wonder what they would do if they were in our shoes today.

Worlds apart

My mother and I are like night and day. Low-energy and high-energy, yin and yang… I have always admired her, especially the sheer force of power she seems to bring with her wherever she went.

In fact, I always wished we had a sibling after me, so maybe those gifts which were so uniquely hers might be passed down. Sometimes, I think, instead of to her

MOM/ C2

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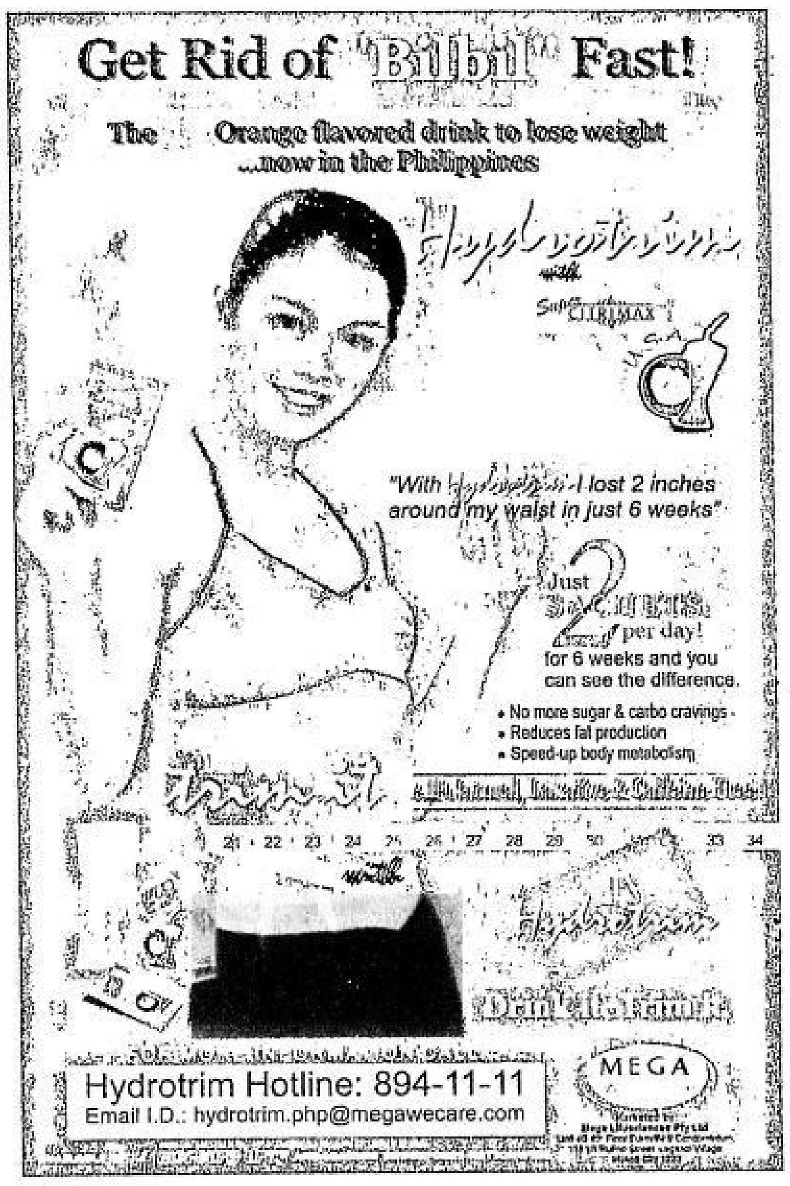

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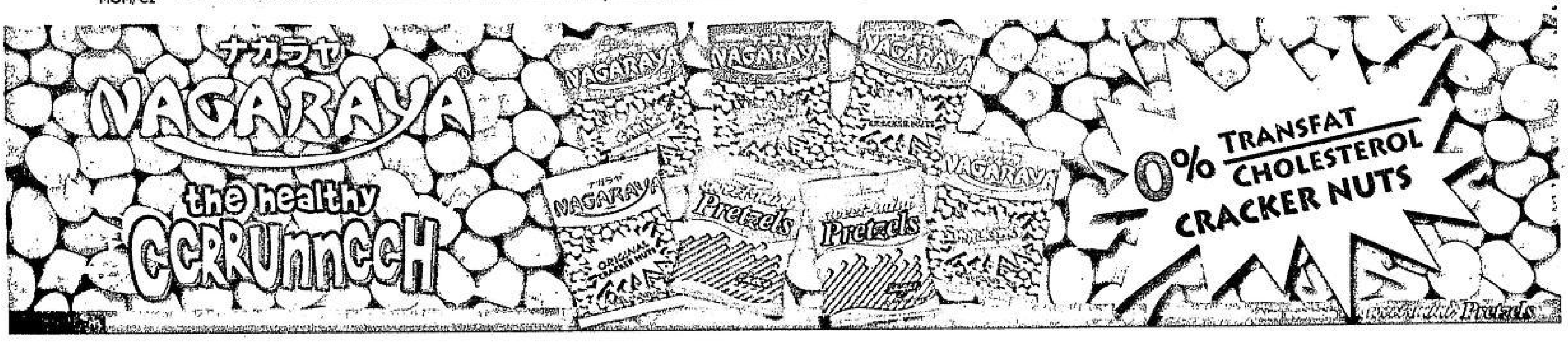
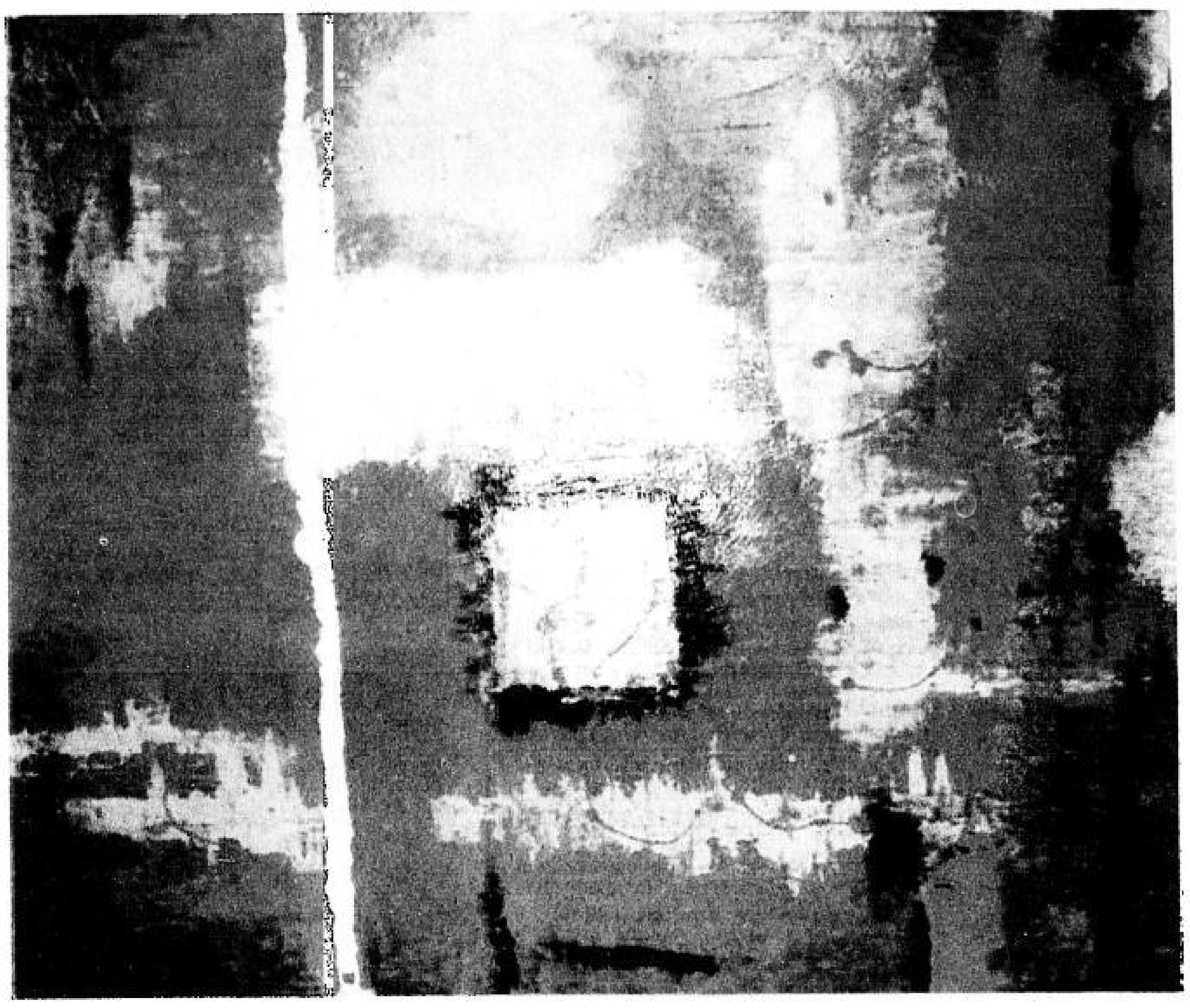
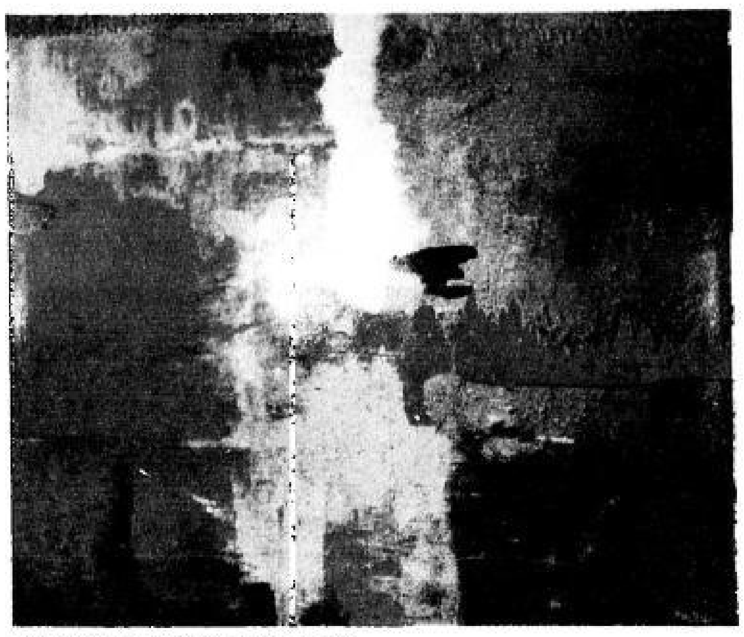
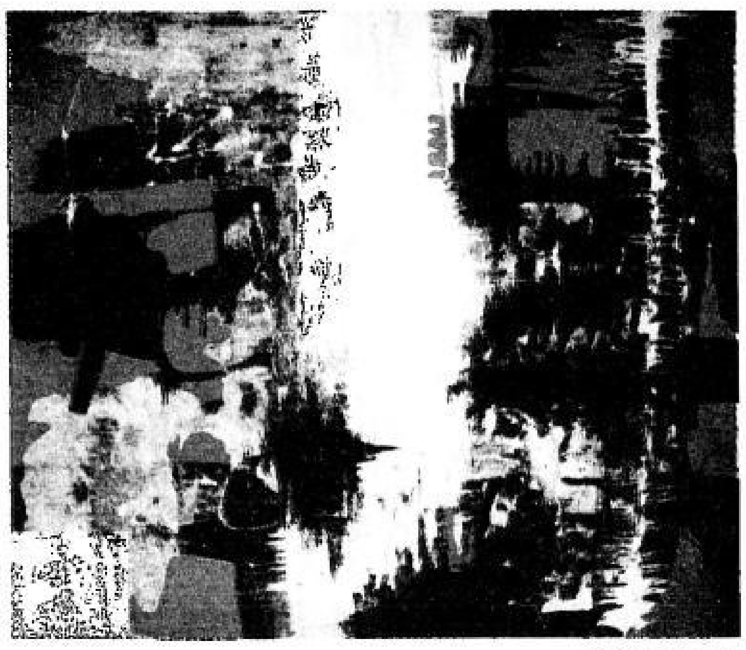


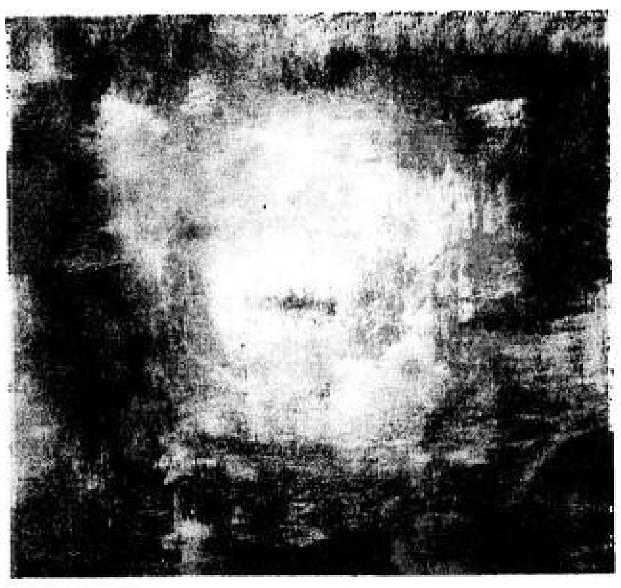
Aaron Bautista poses a problem to the viewer as his abstract artworks can also be seen as figurative

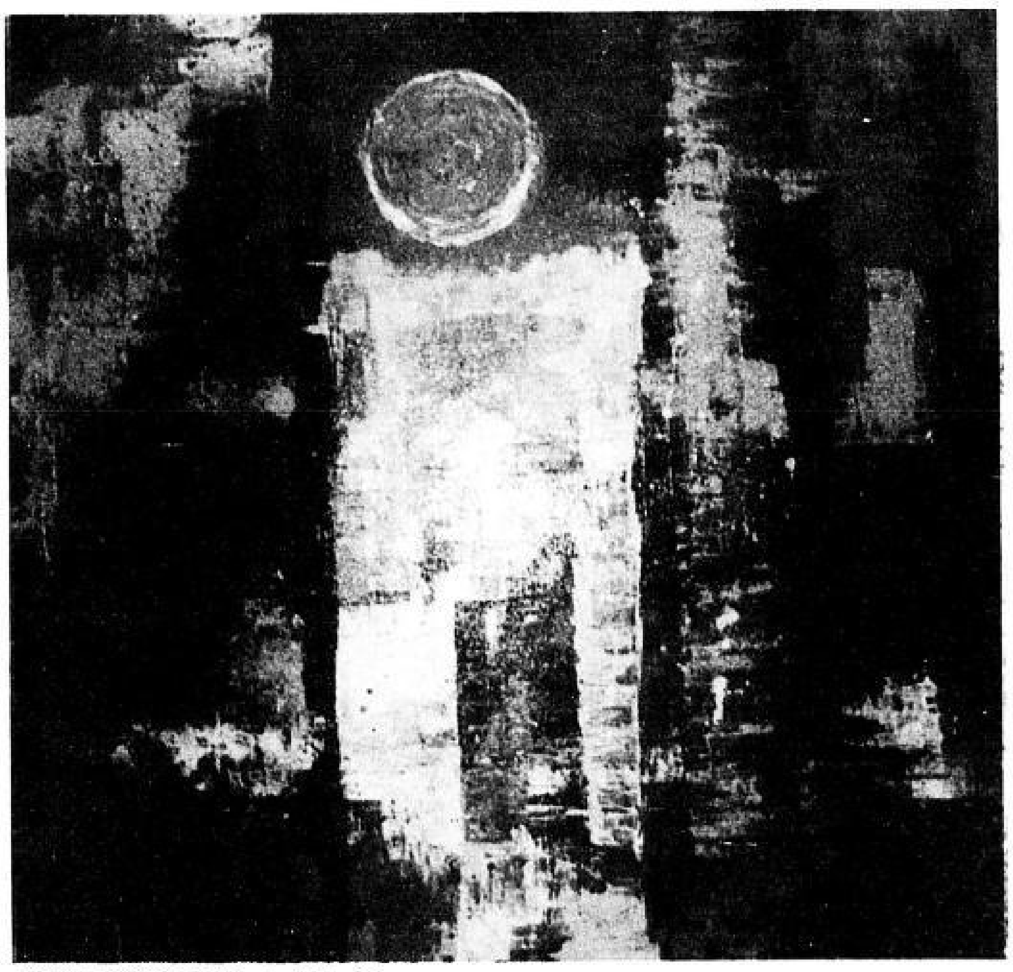

"CHROMESCAPE Series (Red)"


"CONCRETESCAPES Series"


"CONCRETE Perception"

Subverting *Nonobjective Art*


"FIELDS of Gold"


"CHROMESCAPE Series (Blue)"

By Constantino C. Tejero

WE KNOW NONOBjective Art does not attempt to represent the form of objects as they appear in nature. That is, the artwork does not contain anything resembling, portraying or representing objects known in physical nature.

Instead, while stressing the formal aspect of art, the abstractionist "emphasizes lines, colors, generalized or geometrical forms, especially with reference to their relationship to one another."

It is the core of this concept that Aaron Bautista somewhat subverts. As abstractionist, he does stress formal relationships in his paintings, but then he poses a problem to the viewer as his abstract can also be seen as figurative.

Consider his second solo exhibit "Concretescapes," pieces in mixed media, in The Second Gallery, 217 Doña Aurora St., Angono, Rizal.

By the exhibit's title, we take it that the artist is portraying the highrises and vehicles clogging the Big City, or the building constructions going on in urban areas, or even the "progress and development" encroaching on the small town and suburbia.

The artist says his materials, at least, are "part of that industrialization theme." He uses oil paint on burlap and spreads it with Versatex mixed with textural elements such as sandstone to attain the patterns he desires.

His color tonality ranges from the bold and bright to the muted and neutral, from warm to cool harmonies. In the "Concrete Perception" series, it is gray, white, black, slate-blue, maroon.

In the "Concretescape" series and the "Chromescape" series, the canvas is saturated with primary and secondary colors, often brilliant blue, vivid red, searing yellow.

It is here where the confusion of the figurative and the abstract occurs. For all the splattering, daubing and layering of pigment in the pictorial frame of "Fields of Gold," we espy a bird's-eye view of a sun-streaked meadow.

That yellow disc on the upper portion of "Chromescape (Red)" could be nothing but the sun. And shouldn't we see as well the blue disc in "Chromescape (Blue)" as a blue moon? Or could it be our lonely planet whirling silently in space?

Maybe we're just seeing things where there is none? Granted there is none, but what about these paintings' titles, if they don't suggest representation? If nothing else, we are seeing pigment on the wall.

While artists like Eghai Roxas and Alfredo Liongoren may mix the representational and the nonrepresentational in a piece, Bautista's is at once representational and nonrepresentational. In this he is practically undermining the principles and character of Nonobjective Art.

He is, of course, not the only one working in this mode. We can cite Ruel Caasi, Roberto Robles, Henri Cainglet, Lindslee, Jojo Austria, Cobie Cruz, Rico Lascano, in certain phases of their respective artmaking.

Bautista says that in this exhibit he has been inspired by the lyrical abstraction of Edwin Wilwayco. But we see points of similarity only in their use of color.

The older artist is also into pattern-making, yet his swirling brushstrokes, swelling curves and flowing lines create an illusion of spontaneity. On the other hand, the rigidity of lines and regularity of his jagged patterns undercut whatever spontaneousness Bautista aspires to.

A fresh graduate from the University of the Philippines College of Fine Arts, Bautista is a member of the now-controversial Neo-Angono Artists Collective. It is in these young blood that we see the rebellious streak that always enriches art in any form.

Mom, the artist

From page C1

own children, her gifts be passed down to the generation of her grandchildren.

Born Dec. 19, 1944, Elaine Ongpin, wife of Pocholo Herbosa, mother to Al and Mia, is the youngest daughter in a brood of seven produced by the union of Luis Ongpin Sr. and Lourdes Velayo.

The marriage produced individuals of extraordinary intellect and larger-than-life characters. All my life, I've heard the words Midas touch whispered around her.

Growing up in her shadow, I knew her power was almost palpable. Everyone knows the book "The Secret."

Well, my mom just recently read it and said she already knew all those things as if she had written it. I saw the film when living in New York last year. I thought of her throughout.

This is mom, especially the prosperity part. One example was how our house was never the same whenever I came home for yearly vacations from the United States. Either the furniture was different, or the rooms were different, or the garden was new, or the house changed. Or the latest development—a thriving painting school/gallery in our home.

THE AUTHOR with mom Elaine and daughter Lana

When I was 7, my mom taught me the song "Que Sera, Sera." She even taped my voice with one of those old recorders while singing it.

Yes, that tape provided us with much laughter. I knew then I could never be a singer no matter how much I felt for the song! I know now it was her way of teaching us that life is what you make of it. "*Que sera sera*, whatever will be, will be."

You see, Mom kept herself ever evolving, ever growing. There was always more to do and learn. Her first job after college was as an art teacher in Baguio. In the '70s, she was one of the first women on the floor of the old Manila Stock Exchange in Binondo.

In the '80s, she was a top insurance agent for PhilAm Life, plus we had that painted woodcraft business. She always had a "workshop."

Then always our kitchen had *ensaimadas* popping out of the oven. Here she was, a baker, too.

Her schedule was always full but she still had time to prioritize our summers for traveling, she always said it was the best kind of education she could give us. And it was.

In the '90s, during the real-estate and stockmarket boom, there was Mom again in the thick of things.

My *ninong* Jimmy used to kid, "If you think Bobby and I are smart, wait till you meet my sister Elaine." I know Mom liked that.

"IN THE Studio L'arc en Ciel"

In 2004, Mom was well on her way to becoming an artist. Shortly before turning 60, she almost died of dengue fever.

I recall this was probably one of the most horrifying four days in our lives. Thank God she pulled through after six bags of blood transfusions, and with her indomitable spirit pulled herself up and concentrated all her faculties in the expression of painting and art.

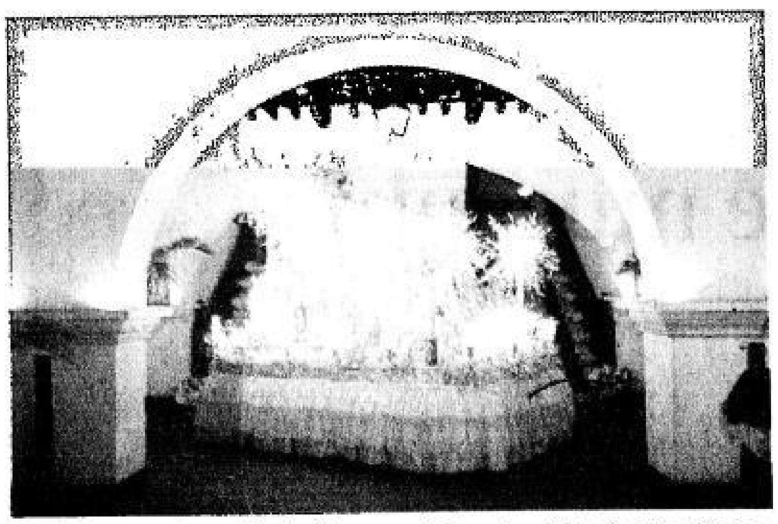
She dove into the world of visual expression and communication and immersed herself in a world of vibrant hues. This is Elaine's life now, painting and teaching art, sharing her ideas of color and beauty. As I said, ever growing, ever evolving…

On Nov. 22, she will have her first solo art exhibition at Ayala Museum, "Rainbows in My Life."

Mom will always be looking for the pot of gold at the end of each rainbow and enjoying her journey of colors with everyone to share.

This is Elaine Ongpin-Herbosa today, the artist, instructor, creator.

EVERYTHING needed to feed a large family and its retinue of helpers is found in this replica of a 200-year-old kitchen.



RESPLENDENT Panlilio family *carosa* being wheeled out of the Museo for the La Naval procession held on De La Salle Dasmariñas campus

STATUE of St. John Baptist De La Salle, Bro. Andrew Gonzalez's last gift to the school before passing away, joins La Naval procession.

Very unique house museum

From page C4

Intricate architectural details superbly carved on tropical hardwood, set off meticulously hand-painted wall and ceiling panels in period colors and patterns, backdrop antique wooden furniture of superb quality, each piece a testament to Philippine craftsmanship.

Tables set in preparation for banquets are covered with diaphanous linen as the backdrop for fine china, crystal and heirloom silver. On the tables are silver *paliteras* (toothpick holders), Philippine sweets in crystal candy bowls, while *pastillas* wrappers hand-cut from the thinnest *papel de japón* tissue cascade from plates.

Quality and comfort

Its collection of heirloom furniture from the ancestral homes of the Panlilio-Santos Joven and Arnedo-González families of Pampanga boasts of rare pieces made by Ah Tay, the Manila master furniture-maker of Chinese origin; traditional furniture and bed linen from the Spanish colonial era; and other objects that added quality and comfort to life two centuries ago.

Everyday life is seen in the bamboo-floored kitchen where cooking utensils, baskets, bowls and tubs tell the story of what it was like to feed a large family and its staff in those days.

The centerpiece of the Museo collection is the chapel with its magnificent silver altar and religious icons, once at the Panlilio-Santos Joven house in Bacolor, that now occupies the central portion of the exhibit space.

At Museo De La Salle, one comes to a museum, not a house, and immediately imbibes the grandeur. If the Museo structure were to have been lived in as a house, it would have been a house like no other in the country.

Philippine civilization

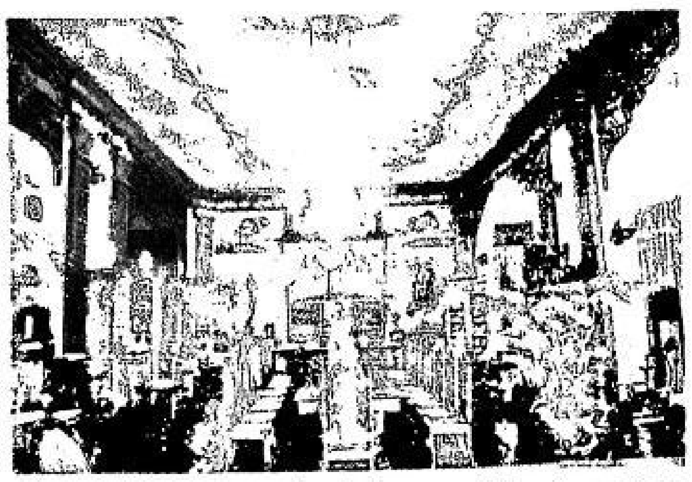
The setting puts on view Philippine civilization at its highest level, lifestyle, and the high level of artisan craftsmanship that illustrates excellence in Philippine achievement during the Spanish colonial era. Every object in the house shows the best the Philippines can offer.

For history aficionados, researchers and designers, Museo De La Salle has what probably is the best Philippine decorative arts collection in the country, having finally evolved into the educational facility that Bro. Andrew envisioned a decade ago.

The Museo is the transplanted reality of two Pampangueño families, Panlilio-Santos Joven of Bacolor and González-Arnedo of Sulipan.

Over a decade ago, the Panlilio-Santos Joven family faced reality and arrived at the brave decision to literally pull up its roots from under meters of lahar dumped on their ancestral home by the Mt. Pinatubo eruption.

They removed their personal belongings and furniture, dismantled their house, and accepted the invitation of Bro. Andrew to set up Museo De La Salle with the outstanding Panlilio family collection as its core, augmented by the exceptional heirlooms of the Arnedo-González family.



THE FINEST china, crystal and silver are set for a banquet on the long dining table.

Educational value

The museum collection has been substantially enriched over the years through bequests or loans from individual collectors which ensure the expert care of their objects in the years ahead, and, more importantly, recognize the educational value of the object itself as it joins the Museo collection.

Museo De La Salle recently entered into an agreement to house the Guevara Collection of lowland Spanish colonial artifacts which includes agricultural implements, furniture, kitchen equipment, and other objects of everyday use.

Definitely worth a visit, Museo De La Salle is a museum with a collection like no other. For more information, bookings or directions on how to get there, call 8447832 or 8449116 loc. 3151.

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'Kulay ug Kalinaw sa Mindanao' at Met Museum

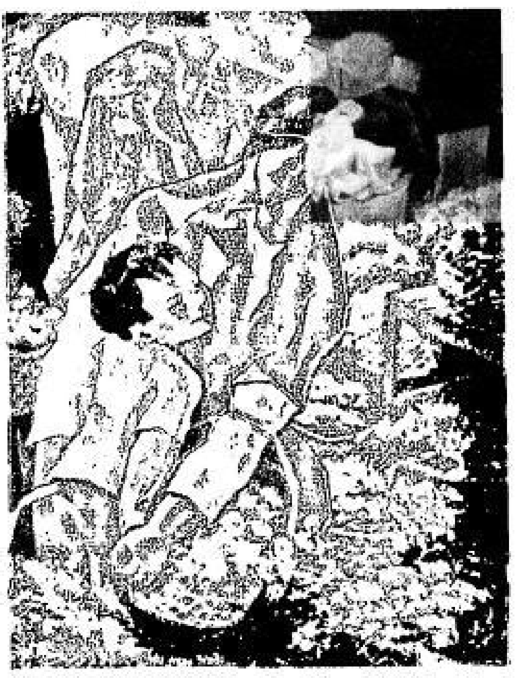
AN EXHIBITION SHOWCASING ART AND peace in the Mindanao region, "Kulay ug Kalinaw sa Mindanao," opens in the Upper Galleries of the Metropolitan Museum of Manila Nov. 15, 3 p.m.

This exhibit gathers artworks that have bearing on the history of conflict and peace settlements in Mindanao; stories of peace, related themes and values; traditional rituals on peace settlement; and symbols and icons associated with peace.

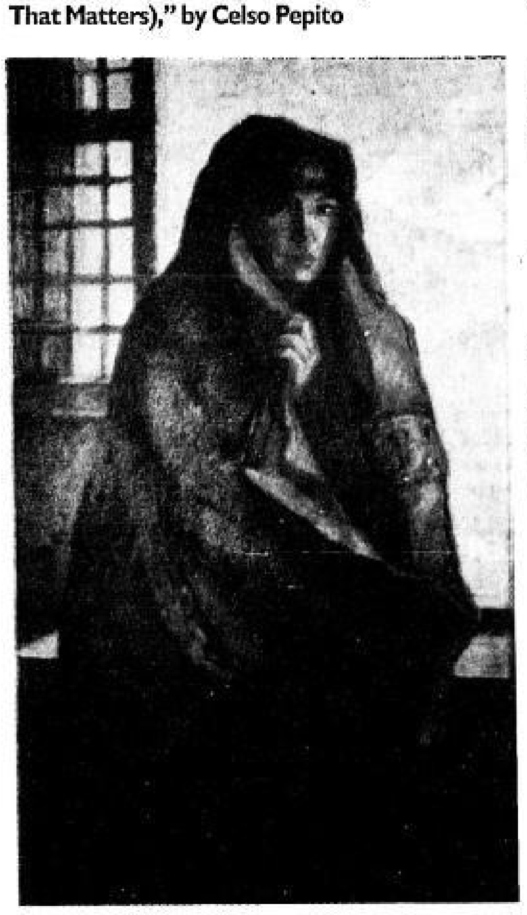
The works of Mindanao's homegrown talents will be highlighted, such as National Artist for Sculpture Abdulmari Asia Imao, Ib'n Saud Salipyasan Ahmad, Brando Arevalo, Nonoy Arevalo, Errol Balcos, Wilman Bastasa, Joel Geolamen, Juni Grapa, Rachel Holazo, Kurt Lluch, Ivan Macarambon, Raymund Malicay, José Olmedo Martinez III, Cocoy Paano, Jun Pamisa, Celso Duazo Pepito, Didi Romano, Reynaldo Su, Eddie Tabancura, Jericho Valjusto Vamenta and Rameer Tawasil.

Performances of the Alun-Alun Dance Circle and Nick Aca will be featured during the exhibit opening. The show runs until Feb. 2. Call 5211517 or 5237855, or log on to www.metmuseum.ph.

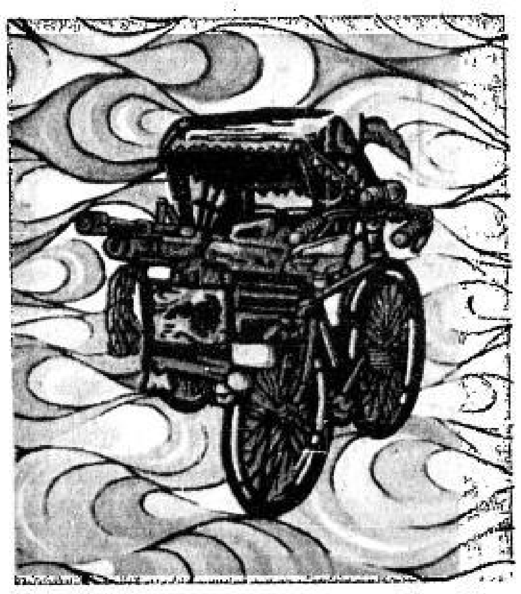
The Metropolitan Museum is at Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Complex, Roxas Boulevard, Malate, Manila. The museum is open Monday-Saturday, 9 a.m.-6 p.m.



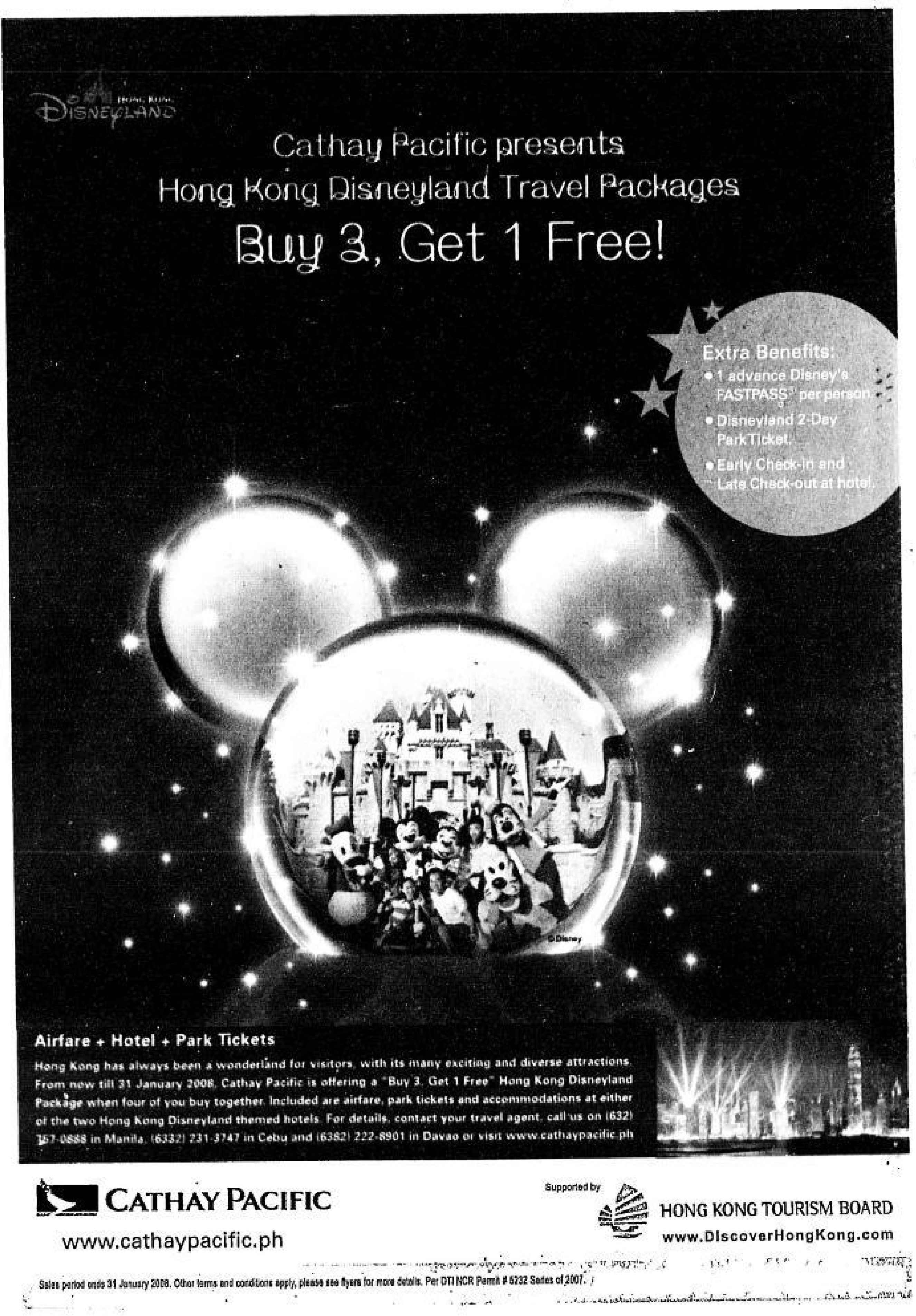
"ANG TRABAHO Moy Pasultion (It Is the Work That Matters)," by Celso Pepito



"GIRL in Malong," by Rachel Holazo



"ARMM-TRICYCLE" I, by Rameer Tawasil



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PRIDE OF PLACE

Augusto Villalon

Very unique house museum

ENVISIONED BY THE LATE Bro. Andrew González, FSC, former DLSU president, as an educational museum reflecting the vanished Spanish colonial lifestyle, Museo De La Salle on the sprawling Dasmariñas, Cavite, campus started 10 years ago, housed in a modern-day replica of the traditional *bahay-na-bato*.

It could have been just another of the many house museums existing in the country. But it has carved an identity of its own.

The Museo, an imposing *bahay-na-bato* far larger in area and height than the traditional house, is so authentic-looking that it fools the eye because of the original antique materials and architectural details incorporated into the structure. It is actually a purpose-built replica of a typical period house transposed to a scale grander than the ordinary, which uplifts it from residential to palatial.

And palatial the museum is without question. Its succession of enormous rooms whose doors, windows and ceilings almost double the height of the normal, contain an outstanding collection of rare Philippine art, furniture, furnishings, decorative art and fashion from the Spanish colonial era.

VERY UNIQUE/ C3

GIRL'S room, with tendril-framed pink walls, displays objects a lass of the era might have had.

PFIZER LAUNCHES ALAGANG SULIT

FAST turning into a common catchword, the term *sulit* has often been misconstrued for cheapness and affordability. With its latest patient support program, Pfizer aims to reinforce the true meaning of "Sulit."

This is the rationale behind the *Alagang Pfizer, Alagang Sulit* campaign, internally launched in May 2007 and recently unveiled to Filipino doctors and the public through print media and radio.

Alagang Sulit follows the success of the two-year *Dapat Sulit* campaign, which produced the award-winning *Kasal* television ad. Using the tagline "*Dahil mahalaga ang buhay, ang gamot dapat sulit*," the Pfizer campaign also included a series of symposia on what pharmacoeconomics actually means.

Pfizer Medical Director Dr. Anthony Leachon says, "We want to communicate what pharmacoeconomics really is. People have this false perception that it is about comparing prices when what it actually means is comparing benefits. We wanted to communicate what goes into every Pfizer pill that a patient purchases–from the clinical evidence to the assurance of quality and down to the patient care program that comes with it. Taken together, this makes for a higher value for a Pfizer medicine over other alternatives."

Alagang Sulit goes beyond explaining true value but introduces Pfizer's system of patient management. This system involves offering benefits to Pfizer patients on Pfizer maintenance medications to improve therapy adherence, building customer relationship through Pfizer's in-house call center and providing educational materials to patients to help them better understand their disease.

Dr. Leachon adds, "We believe that outcomes will be better if both doctors and patients are engaged in disease management. This is the value-added service that Pfizer patients receive: we don't just make medicines, we are interested in the long-term health outcomes of our patients, which can only be achieved by helping them understand their disease and adhere to prescribed therapy better. Pfizer has one of the more comprehensive patient programs, which distinguishes Pfizer's "Alaga" as value-laden, and relevant. "

In partnership with the country's healthcare providers, the doctors, Pfizer undertakes patient care programs that offer meaningful solutions to health care quality and cost problems associated with chronic diseases. These programs provide enrolled patients with health information, health maintenance reminders and medicine compliance support. It is Pfizer's way of supporting patients who wish to actively overcome roadblocks to better health management.

ADVT

A life long-lived, a life well-lived

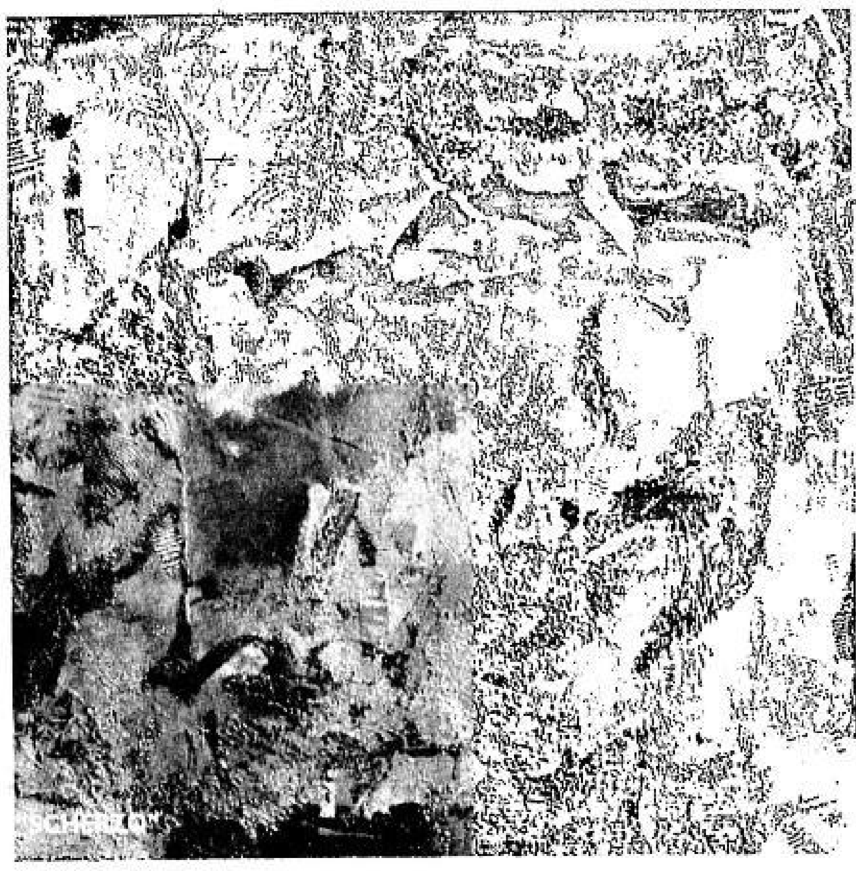
Salamat sa Maykapal, sa tulong ni doktor at sa alagang binibigay ng Pfizer Patient Care Program.

For Lolo Pio and Lola Salud, holding their first great-grandchildren marked a milestone in their lives. After all, they surpassed the normal life expectancy of heart patients like themselves. It helped too that Lolo Pio and Lola Salud have been under the care of Pfizer Patient Care Program all these years.

Sa Pfizer, naaalagaan sila ng mga gamot na subok, mabisa at binuhusan ng research. With Pfizer Patient Care Program, patients are educated on their disease and taught how they can achieve a healthier lifestyle. The birth of their great-grandchildren is but the beginning of more memories to come. Lolo Pio and Lola Salud are definitely living lives that are not only long-lived but well-lived as well.

ASK YOUR DOCTOR ABOUT THE PFIZER PATIENT CARE PROGRAM TODAY.

Alagang Pfizer. Alagang Sulit. Pfizer



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Wilwayco in Singapore

STORY ON PAGE D2

"SCHERZO" (left photo): Edwin, Moma and Loby Wilwayco

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COKE HERALDS THE COMING OF CHRISTMAS

Christmas is the most anticipated and celebrated occasion in every Filipino home. As early as when the "ber" months come around, indications of the coming Christmas season begin to surround us, drowning us all in an atmosphere of immense delight and gladness.

It is not surprising that Moms always make Christmas mealtimes special for the family – she adorns her home with beautiful Christmas décor, brings out her best silverware, painstakingly cooks the family's favorite dishes, and makes sure her family experiences the specialness of the occasion. Indeed, the gathering together during special occasions of every family member—from sons and daughters, to parents and grandparents, down to whole sets of cousins, aunts, uncles and even family friends—is what distinguishes Filipinos from the other peoples of the world.

Naturally, no Filipino Christmas table is truly complete without a bottle of ice-cold Coca-Cola Litro. For decades, Coke has been making every Filipino meal more special as it enhances the taste of our Christmas food, adds laughter to the conversations, and allows family members to catch up with each other . And to make Christmas even more exciting for every family, starting October 21, Coca-Cola will be rewarding, through its Coca-Cola Kasalo sa Pasko Promo, those moms who make Coke Litro part of their meals.

Consumers just need to buy Coke Litro and look under the cap to see if it's one of the winning Kasalo Caps. They have to present ONE (1) Winning Kasalo Cap plus FOUR (4) Red Litro Caps, to redeem their special Kasalo Spoon and Fork collectibles at participating sari-sari stores and public markets nationwide.

With sets of Kasalo Spoons and Forks, Coke Litro, and all your special Christmas meals, you're sure to have a splendid dining table that sings and dances in a medley of tastes, smells and colors!

Now you top everything off with the love and laughter that comes from your family and the thought that Coke will be bringing you even more surprises this season and what you'll have indeed is the merriest Christmas celebration in the whole world.

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**Photo may vary from actual unit.

WITH EUGENIE Teo, gallery owner's wife

GALLERY owner Allan Teo, Maria Lumem B. Isleta, minister and consul general of the Embassy of the Philippines; Philippine Ambassador to Singapore Belen F. Anota, and Robert Bjorn Santos

Wilwayco in Singapore

MEETING Singaporean art-lovers

ARTIST'S guest book

EDWIN WILWAYCO'S "SCHERZO" exhibit recently opened at Momentous Art Gallery in Singapore. The opening was attended by guests from the Philippines and the expatriate community, as well as Singaporean art-lovers.

The Philippine Ambassador to Singapore Belen F. Anota and Robert Bjorn Santos were the guests of honor. Santos, art director of Fatima University Gallery, flew from Manila for the occasion. Cecilia Ong from Christie's Singapore also attended the opening.

The artist himself was on hand to meet with the guests, along with gallery owner Allan Teo.

ARTIST Edwin Wilwayco

Annual photo exhibit

THE AYALA ALABANG CAMERA CLUB IS holding its 5th annual photo exhibit, "Curves," until Nov. 19 at Chefs Avenue, L/3, Festival Supermall, near Seattle's Best. Featured are some 200 interpretations by the 25 participants of the theme from nature, architecture, human, graphics and still life. The Ayala Alabang Camera Club is a nonstock, nonprofit organization. "Curves" is sponsored by Epson, Festival Supermall, Hula Hula Restaurant, Fitness First and Sun Life Financial.

photo by Eric Lim

photo by Gino Cruz

Tribute to 5 photojournalists

SILVERLENS FOUNDATION INC., IN association with Silverlens Gallery, invites everyone to "5 Photographers (Part 3): A Tribute to 5 Pioneering Masters of Philippine Photojournalism."

The exhibit opens Nov. 22, 6 p.m., and will consist of photographs and photographic essays from five of the country's foremost photojournalists: Joe Gabor, Romy Vitug, Mario Co, Silverio Enriquez, and Ed Santiago.

The five photographers represent a critical time in Philippine photojournalism, when photography was in its nascent state as an artform.

The first "5 Photographers" exhibit was mounted in 1967 in Indigo Gallery, run by Bencab, now National Artist for the Visual Arts. He was then layout artist at the Sunday Times Magazine, where all of the said photographers had contributed to or worked at some point in their young careers.

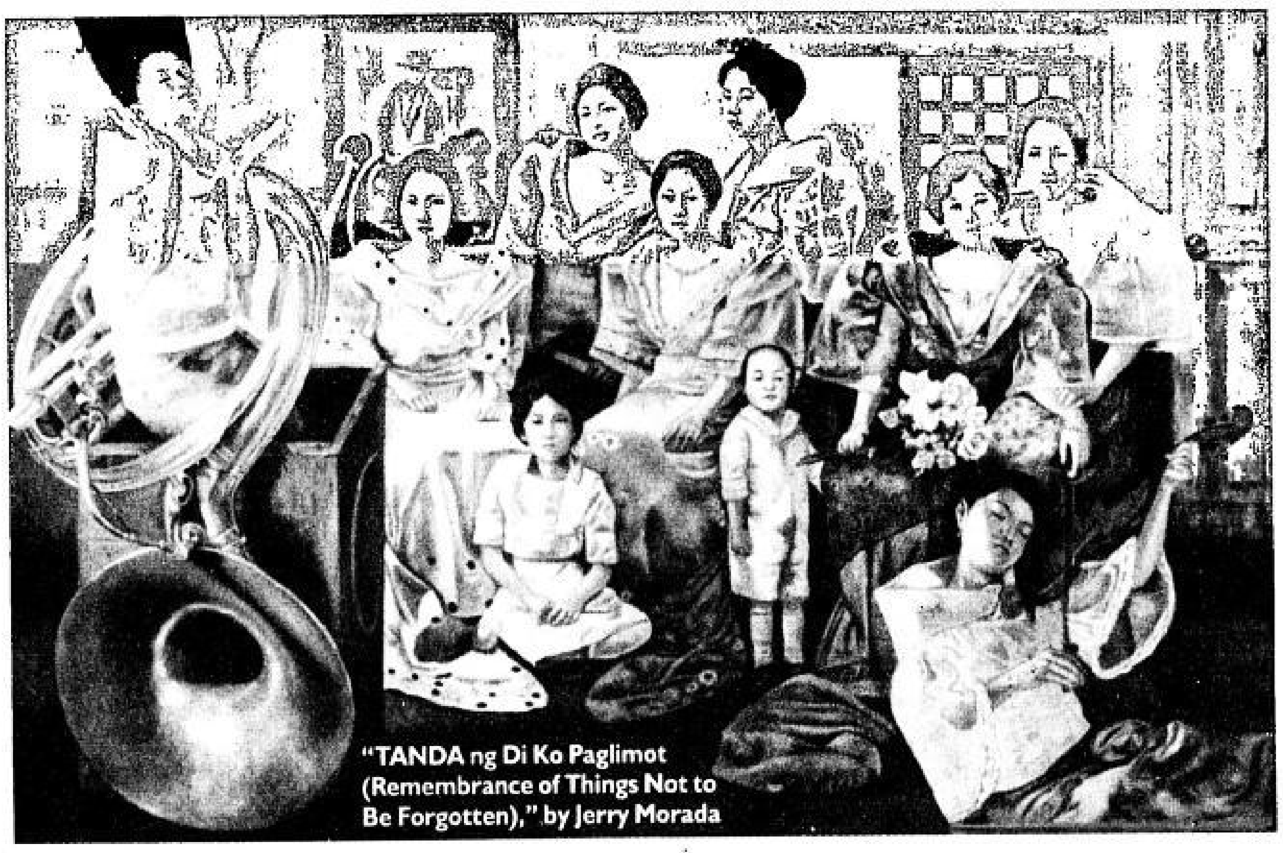
The five stood out because of their sensitivity of expression, imagination and ability to "[raise] the prosaic to the level of astonishment, the lyrical, and, not the least of all, imposing a significance on what is often taken for granted, ignored, despised," says writer Emmanuel Torres, who wrote the exhibition notes for the second "5 Photographers" exhibit in 1973.

Curated by photojournalist José Enrique Soriano, the chosen works in this exhibit consist of the best "5 Photographers" produced during that Golden Age of Filipino Photojournalism. They are works that reflect the political, economic, social and cultural scene of those times. They not only show how these particular five saw their fellow Filipinos, but how Filipinos saw themselves during that era.

The exhibit runs until Dec. 20.

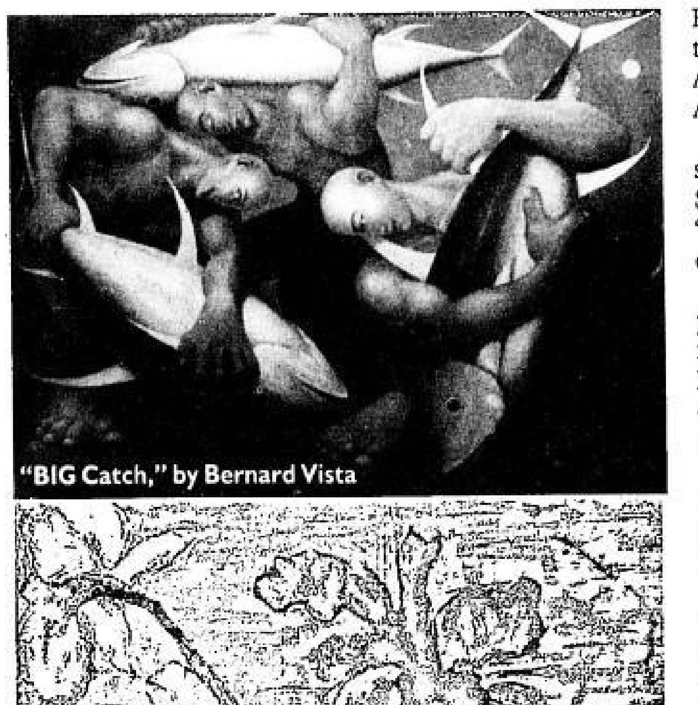
Accompanying the exhibit will be a panel discussion about the Golden Age of Philippine Magazine Journalism, with Santiago, Vitug and writer Eugenia D. Apostol on Dec. 1, 3-5 p.m.

Silverlens Gallery is at 2320 Pasong Tamo Ext., Warehouse 2, Yupangco Building. Call 8160044, 0905-2650873, e-mail manage@silverlensphoto.com or visit www.silverlensphoto.com.

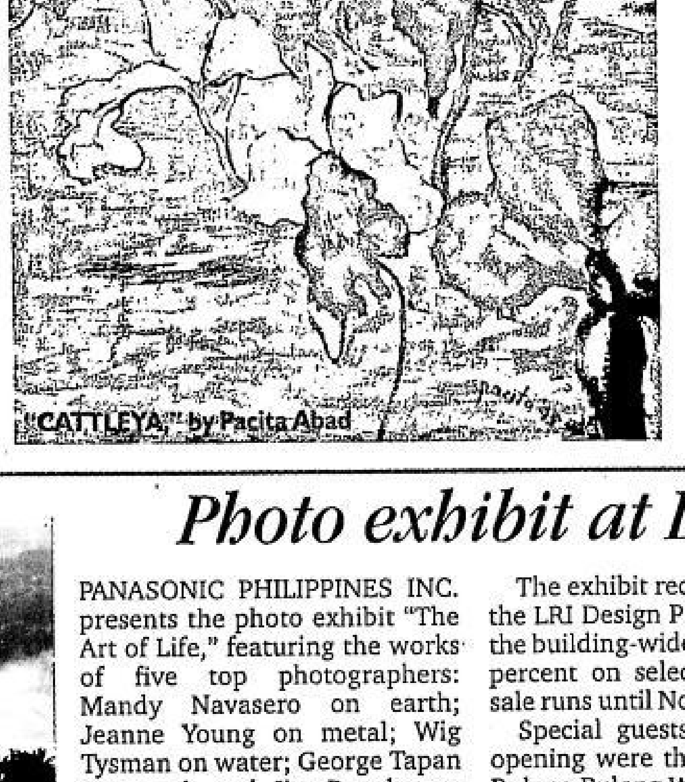


"TANDA ng Di Ko Paglimot (Remembrance of Things Not to Be Forgotten)," by Jerry Morada

Filipino artworks a hit in Singapore auction



"BIG Catch," by Bernard Vista



"CATTLEYA," by Pacita Abad

FILIPINO ARTISTS ENJOYED A SUCCESSFUL RECEPtion at the recently concluded Larasati "Pictures of Asia" auction, the auction house's 10th on Southeast Asian paintings held at Marriott Hotel in Singapore.

Over 200 art collectors participated, realizing total sales of S$3.4 million, an increase from last year's S$1.85 million. Over 70 works surpassed their presale "high" estimates, often doubling, tripling or even quadrupling expectations.

The sale also established new auction record prices for many works of art, including a new world record for China's Gong Lilong which also marked Larasati's largest taking for the day. The artist's oil on canvas, "The Duet," was sold for S$212,400 (P6,372,000).

Of the 29 Filipino paintings offered, 25 were sold, indicating an 86-percent success rate—higher than the overall 83-percent success rate for all the lots.

Aside from National Artist Arturo Luz, those that generated the highest final prices were Pacita Abad (S$7,670/P230,100); Welbart Bartolome's "Idolottery" (S$7,080/P212,400); Joy Mallari's "Asinta" (S$5,664/P169,920); Vincent de Pio's "La Musique" (S$5,428/P162,840); Lydia Velasco's "Beauties in the Garden" (S$5,310/P159,300); Jerry Morada's "Kalayaan" (S$5,310/P159,300); Bernard Vista (S$5,310/P159,300); and Sandra Fabie Gfeller's "Summer" (S$5,192/P155,760).

Others that did quite well were the works of Jaspher Penuliar (S$4,956/P148,680); Rodel Tapaya's "Farewell Father" (S$4,956/P148,680), and Aileen Lanuza's "The Soloist."

Jerry Morada's "Tanda ng Di Paglimot" and "The Secret of the Brown Scapular" and Reynaldo de la Cruz's "Good Samaritan" each went for S$4,720 (P141,600).

"LILOAN River, North Cebu," by Mandy Navasero, and **"Bohol Countryside,"** by George Tapan

Photo exhibit at LRI Design Plaza

PANASONIC PHILIPPINES INC. presents the photo exhibit "The Art of Life," featuring the works of five top photographers: Mandy Navasero on earth; Jeanne Young on metal; Wig Tysman on water; George Tapan on wood; and Jim Paredes on fire.

The exhibit recently opened at the LRI Design Plaza, in time for the building-wide sale of up to 50 percent on selected items. The sale runs until Nov. 26.

Special guests at the exhibit opening were the core group of Bulong Pulong Women in Media. "The Art of Life" is open Monday-Sunday, 10 a.m.-7 p.m.

LRI Design Plaza has over 30 showrooms, each owned by an artisan. It is a one-stop lifestyle center for home furniture, furnishings, accessories, antiques, art galleries, collectibles and more.

Call 8955470 or 8951772.

10 secrets to wealth and success

AL SEMBRANO

A NEW SELF-HELP AUDIO BOOK CALLED "10 Sikreto ng Mga Mayayaman, Book 1 of 10 (English Edition and Tagalog Edition)," by Filipino-American Al Sembrano; is now available in leading bookstores and music bars nationwide. It can be purchased online at www.Sikreto.com and www.Mayaman.com.

Sembrano says the book is a realistic guide that empowers the Filipino to achieve wealth and success by applying the personal inner secrets of the rich into one's life."

He decided to make the audio book available in both English and Tagalog to reach more Filipinos.

Audio Book 1 "covers the very first step to become wealthy and successful, which has nothing to do with money or financial strategies. What the real rich have taught me over the decades is that the acquisition of money and wealth is nothing but a by-product of one's personal and business attitude and outlook in life and the consequent action that follows. 'Build yourself first and the money will come,'" Sembrano says.

The second volume of the 10-book series will come out by the end of the year and will cover topics on understanding how money grows and how to respect it to make millions for oneself.

The series is published by Chelsey McCaw Publishing, Inc., a local multimedia company. A significant percentage of the profit from the sales will go to Eufemia Sembrano Scholarship Foundation. Eufemia Sembrano is the author's mother.

Call 7535315 or 0922-9365252.

INTERNATIONAL MUSIC FESTIVAL AT SAN AGUSTIN CHURCH
The 9th San Agustin International Music Festival, the premier musical and cultural event in Intramuros, unreels on Nov. 28-30 at San Agustin Church with an assemblage of fine musicians. This year's festival has a special relevance since it marks the 10th anniversary of the restoration of the 18th-century pipe organ of San Agustin Church, a National Cultural Landmark. Featured artists are Spanish organist Miquel González; Filipino bassoonist Adolfo Mendoza; world-renowned Philippine Madrigal Singers; Hail Mary the Queen Children's Choir; Union Church Chancel Choir; and Manila Philharmonic Brass Ensemble. Call 5266793 to 94 or 5274060 to 61.

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An exhibit by friends

LE SOUFFLÉ RESTAURANT at Rockwell Leisure Club features for November the works of two Bel-Air residents; two Rockwell condo dwellers and their artist teachers.

The teachers are Edgar Doctor, Gig de Pio and Randy Roa. Student artists are Ching Caluag, Linda Miranda and Baby Paterno.

Also featured at Le Soufflé are digital photographs taken by Rockwell resident Ting Paterno in Eastern Europe, Puerto Galera and other parts of the Philippines.

UP Diliman literary symposium Nov. 22-24

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE Philippines will host the 12th Biennial Symposium on the Literatures and Cultures of the Asia-Pacific Region on Nov. 22-24 in Diliman, QC.

Titled "Rewor(l)dings: Contestations and Reconfigurations in the Literatures and Cultures of the Asia-Pacific Region," the symposium is part of UP Diliman's contributions to the celebration of the UP's centennial in 2008.

The activity is organized by the Department of English and Comparative Literature, College of Arts and Letters.

The symposium consists of an international circuit of writers and scholars, all experts in their fields, who will present papers and their latest works.

Philippine literature and culture will be showcased, since presentations by Filipino writers and scholars are an important part of the affair.

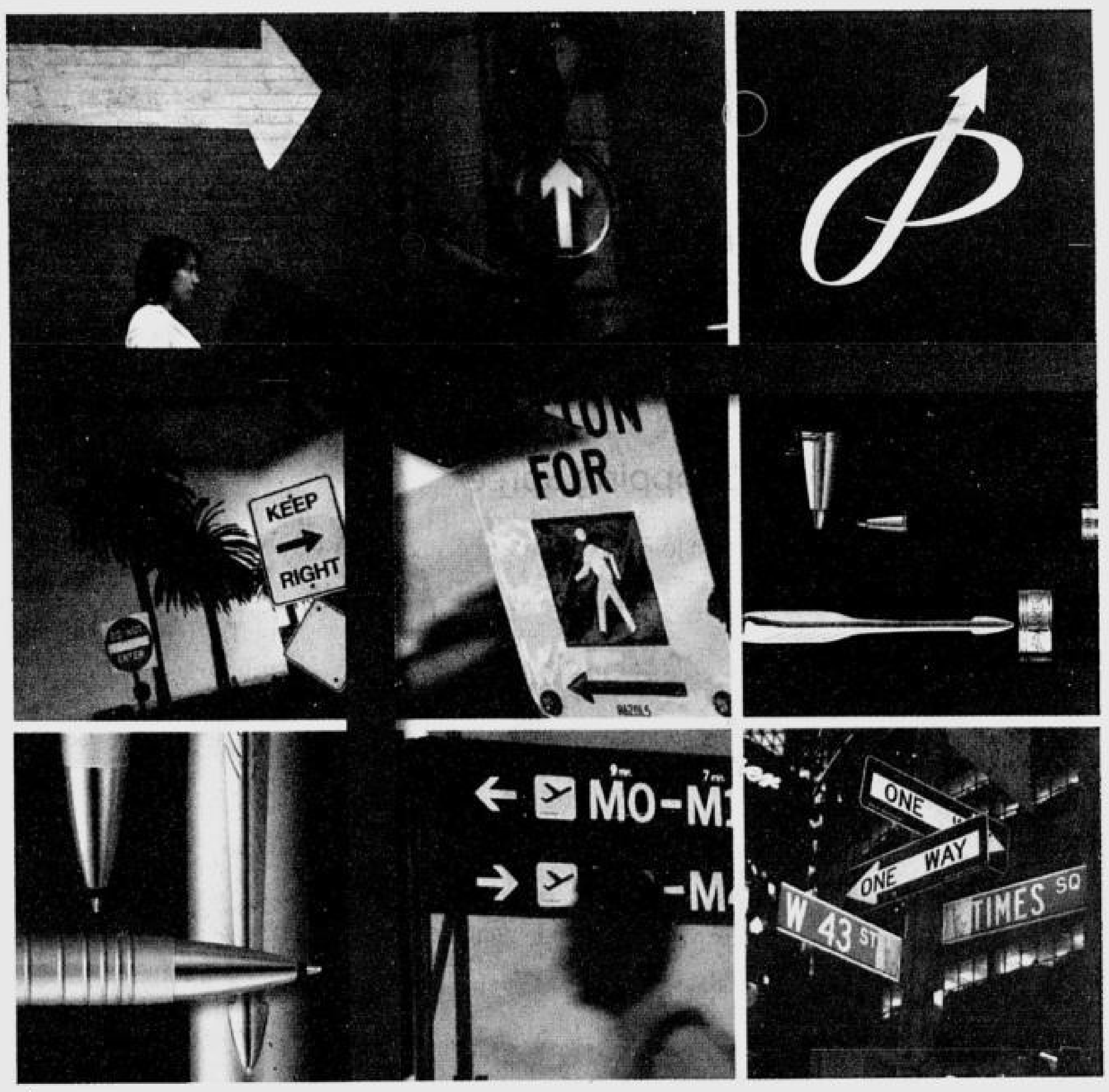
Keynote speakers are National Artist for Literature Bienvenido Lumbera and Gemino H. Abad of UP; Dennis Haskell of the University of Western Australia; Budi Darma of Universitas Negeri Surabaya; and Rajeev Patke of the National University of Singapore.

Selected members of other tertiary institutions in the country have also been invited to the symposium, among them Carlos Palanca Hall of Fame Awardee Jose Y. Dalisay and much-awarded poet and critic J. Neil Garcia of UP; Ferdinand Lopez of UST; and Danilo M. Reyes of the Ateneo.

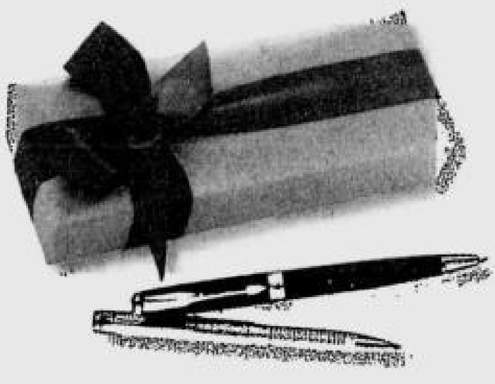
The symposium will also feature round-table discussions on contemporary literary trends and literary publishing.

About 130 participants are expected. The conference convenors are Cristina Pantoja Hidalgo and Lily Rose Tope.

ST. LUKE'S RECEIVES PAINTING
Cardiologist and former director of St. Luke's Heart Institute, painter Dr. William Chua, donates one of his paintings to the Department of Radiation Oncology, headed by Dr. Miriam Joy C. Calaguas. Titled "Physiology of a Promise," it depicts the intricate and intimate relationship between the blood, heart and lungs. Chua's paintings have been exhibited in Edsa Shangri-La and Makati Shangri-La hotels. Proceeds of these exhibits have been given to charity scholarships for the health professions. Some of Chua's works are displayed at St. Luke's. Also in the photo is Julius Caesar Rojales, department manager.



The write gift this Christmas



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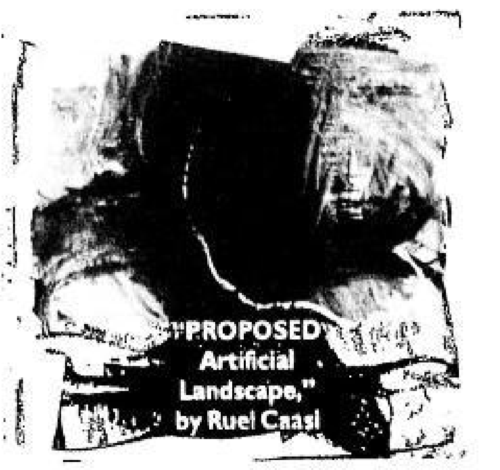

"PROPOSED Artificial Landscape," by Ruel Caasi

Caasi at The Drawing Room

Ruel Caasi presents "Oil Paintings," new works on canvas and paper, Nov. 24-Dec. 15, at The Drawing Room (G/F, Metrostar Bldg., 1007 Metropolitan Ave., Makati City, tel. 8977877 or 8976990). The recent works focus on direct relationship with reality, offering a hint on survival from our tarnishing environmental condition and climate of uncertainty caused by oil spill and human destruction. Primarily acrylic-based, Caasi combines oil-based industrial pigments and solutions that link to the world of two poles, chance and control.

Luz at Crucible

National Artist Arturo Luz presents "Metal Sculptures," until Nov. 27 at Crucible Gallery, 4/L, Art Center, Bldg. A., SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City (tel. 6356061). Luz worked long and hard on his metal sculptures, traveling weekly to Laguna to execute his sculptural ideas.

Magpantay at Artes Orientes

Angono-based artist Maia Magpantay presents her third one-woman show "At Work and at Play," Nov. 20-Dec. 4, at Artes Orientes, 2/F, Entertainment Center, SM Mall of Asia, Pasay City (tel. 5560590 or 0917-5230877). Her pieces show a joie de vivre in Filipino tradition, culture and values.

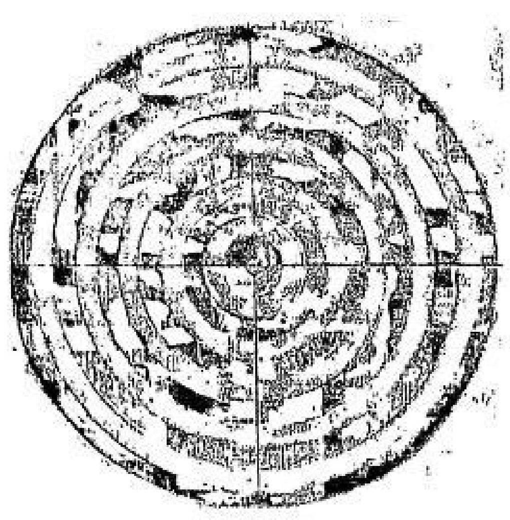
Dinglasan at Eastwood

The Art Discovery and Learning Foundation Inc., presents a one-man show by José Dinglasan, until Nov. 25 at the Cinema Lobby, 4/F, Citywalk 2, Eastwood City, Libis, QC. Dinglasan will showcase his paintings in "Dahon sa Iba't-Ibang Panahon," done in pastel and acrylic.

TAM Austria and his family are welcomed by Ambassador Virginia Benavidez at the Philippine embassy in Brunei Darussalam. In photo are Consul Raymund Escalona, Monina Escalona, Jaime Escalon, Monica Escalon, Ambassador Luis Escalon, Ambassador Benavidez, the artist, consul Ramon Escalon, Isabel Zeryco, Alma Regala, Bella Grande, Divine Austria and Sofie Bugarin.

Malang, Cana, Cruz show

"Curves" by Malang, Cris Cruz and Cana opens today at Alliance Total Gallery. The exhibit runs until Dec. 3. Call 8957585/8957441 for details.


"HABITAT (Series of 4)," by Alfredo Juan Aquilizan

Aquilizan at Duemila

Galleria Duemila (210 Loring St., Pasay City) presents "Waterworks," by Alfredo Juan Aquilizan, until Dec. 4. The artist returns to his roots of painting—or, rather, the home of his heart. His paintings are in hues of gray with black and white and silver—reflecting the shorelines of the Queensland beaches, specifically the Sunshine Coast where he and his children go to spend time together. Call 8319990 and 8339815.

Soguilon at Boston Gallery

Britania Art Projects and Silangan Foundation for the Arts, Culture and Ecology present London-based Filipino artist Kris Soguilon in his fifth solo exhibit "Adobo-Fish and Chips," until Nov. 30 at Boston Gallery (72 Boston St., Cubao, QC). The works are an anthology of interesting characters finding their way into the Pinoy storyteller's awareness. Call 3876373.

Payawal at Hiraya

Butch Payawal presents his latest one-man show "The Dance of Life," until Dec. 4 at Hiraya Gallery (530 United Nations Ave., Ermita, Manila, tel. 5233331). The exhibit is a memoir of family life. Payawal chose the art of ballroom dancing as allegory for the dynamics of wedded bliss and child parenting.

Workshops at Mag:net

Mag:net Katipunan presents "Hanging-out Classes" this month. Courses offered this year are creative writing, painting techniques, songwriting, Rockstar computer skills and cinematography. Call 9293191, 0917-5280716, 0919-2574808 and 0917-8941886 for details.

Pottery fest in Greenbelt

"Contemplate: The Fellowship of the Clay" will be held at the Greenbelt 3 Park of Ayala Center, Makati. The event will be a pottery festival led by the Putik Association of pottery artists. One of the show's features is the "SouMak Bed 'n' Beddings" of Sonny Cruz.

Villanueva and Feleo at National Museum

The National Art Gallery of the National Museum of the Philippines presents "Aklasang Basi," until Dec. 14 at 5/F, South Wing of the Museum of the Filipino People, tel. 5271219. The exhibit features Esteban Villanueva's "Basi Revolt (1821)" series of 14 panels and the works of Roberto Feleo.

Group exhibit

Grupong Atelier mounts its 7th art exhibit "Heart to Art," Nov. 24-Dec. 17, at Galeria de las Islas, 3/F, Silahis Center, Gen. Luna St., Intramuros, Manila (tel. 5272113). The exhibit features over 50 paintings—from the simplest subject to complex imageries—executed in various media by 19 artists.

Aguilar at ArtistSpace

Leopoldo Aguilar Jr., a native of Cebu and a Joya awardee, presents "Simplicated," Dec. 11-27, at ArtistSpace, 2/F Glass Wing, Ayala Museum, Makati City. The exhibit presents the artist's description of line, which means being both simple and complicated, compelling various symbolism and expression, depending on its composition.

Photo exhibit

The Camera Club of the Philippines (CCP) launched a gala exhibit for its Masters Photographers, Emil Davocol and Rudy de Leon, with the theme "Black and White Rainbows (A Photo Exhibit in Living Black and White)." The exhibit features 24 black-and-white photographs of still lifes, people and landscapes. Limited-edition prints can be purchased. The exhibit runs until Nov. 20. Call Camera Club at 0917-5266673 or 0920-9052699 or e-mail info@cameraclub.ph or www.cameraclub.ph.

Sanso at Ayala

The Ayala Museum (G/F Gallery, Makati Ave. cor. De La Rosa St., Makati City, tel. 7577117 local 10) presents "Water: The Medium" by Juvenal Sanso, Nov. 23-Jan. 13.

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THE CAST of New Voice Company's "Into the Woods," directed by Rito Asilo

Tales as old as time, now retold in song

New Voice Company's production of the Stephen Sondheim musical "Into the Woods" opened a weekend ago at the Music Museum with tremendous verve, expressiveness and artistry

By Gibbs Cadiz

IF THERE'S ONE THING HALF a lifetime of theatergoing can teach you, it is that the urge to either jump up in ovation or walk out in disgust at the play you're watching comes rather infrequently.

Far fewer productions are drop-dead triumphs or spectacular failures. Most, in fact, settle into that fuzzy groove somewhere between brilliant and crappy, great and wretched, good and bad—what one might call, in gay parlance, "*Keri na.*"

Because it doesn't happen often, encountering a superior piece of theater thus becomes all the more memorable.

This year, a handful of shows managed to leap beyond the footlights to galvanize us to our feet: the short-lived "Sa Ngalan ng Anak" of UP Dulaang Laboratoryo (directed by Amiel Leonardia, based on Arthur Miller's "All My Sons"); Nonon Padilla's "Belong Puti" for Peta, Layeta Bucoy's one-act "Ellas Inocentes" in the Virgin Labfest under Tuxqs Rutaquio's direction; Chris Millado's restaging of Mario O'Hara's "Insiang" for Tanghalang Pilipino; Bobby Garcia's "Avenue Q" for Atlantis Productions.

One more entry will now be added to that list: New Voice Company's production of the Stephen Sondheim musical "Into The Woods," which opened a weekend ago at the Music Museum with tremendous verve, expressiveness and artistry.

Dark and complex

Sondheim and James Lapine's masterwork—a dark and complex interweaving of several fairy tales set to often dissonant, angular music (though by Sondheim standards it's one of his more tuneful scores)—has enjoyed a long life in the musical repertory ever since its Broadway debut in 1987.

Sondheim, who by this time had assembled a virtual gallery of offbeat characters for his musicals (the serial-killing barber Sweeney Todd, the commitment-phobic Bobby of "Company," the aging showgirls of "Follies," the xenophobic shoguns of ancient Japan in "Pacific Overtures"), trained his sights on another group ripe for re-imagining.

He took the Grimms' most beloved characters—among them Cinderella, Rapunzel, Jack (of the Beanstalk mischief) and Little Red Riding Hood—and let them loose as denizens of an enchanted forest, the unhindered atmosphere of which would uncork their fears, passions and prejudices as they crisscrossed each other's lives. And that's just Act I.

Act II, about their tangled "ever after" lives, is even more tricky.

All that starry dust-up is presented in this "Into the Woods" with becoming freshness and clarity. There is pleasure to be had in realizing how its director, Rito Asilo, and his gifted ensemble have labored to remain faithful to the material while going to great lengths to put their own idiosyncratic stamp to it.

Contemporary bent

In its original form, the musical upended its storybook period setting with a winking dose of urban American irony. Witness Sondheim's impish lyrics (e.g., "Let the moment go/Don't forget it for a moment, though/Just remembering you've had an AND/When you're back to OR/Makes the OR mean more than it did before," from "Moments in the Woods").

This version retains that knowing, bemused tone, but makes it somehow softer, gentler, more heartfelt. That approach robs

TALES/ E3

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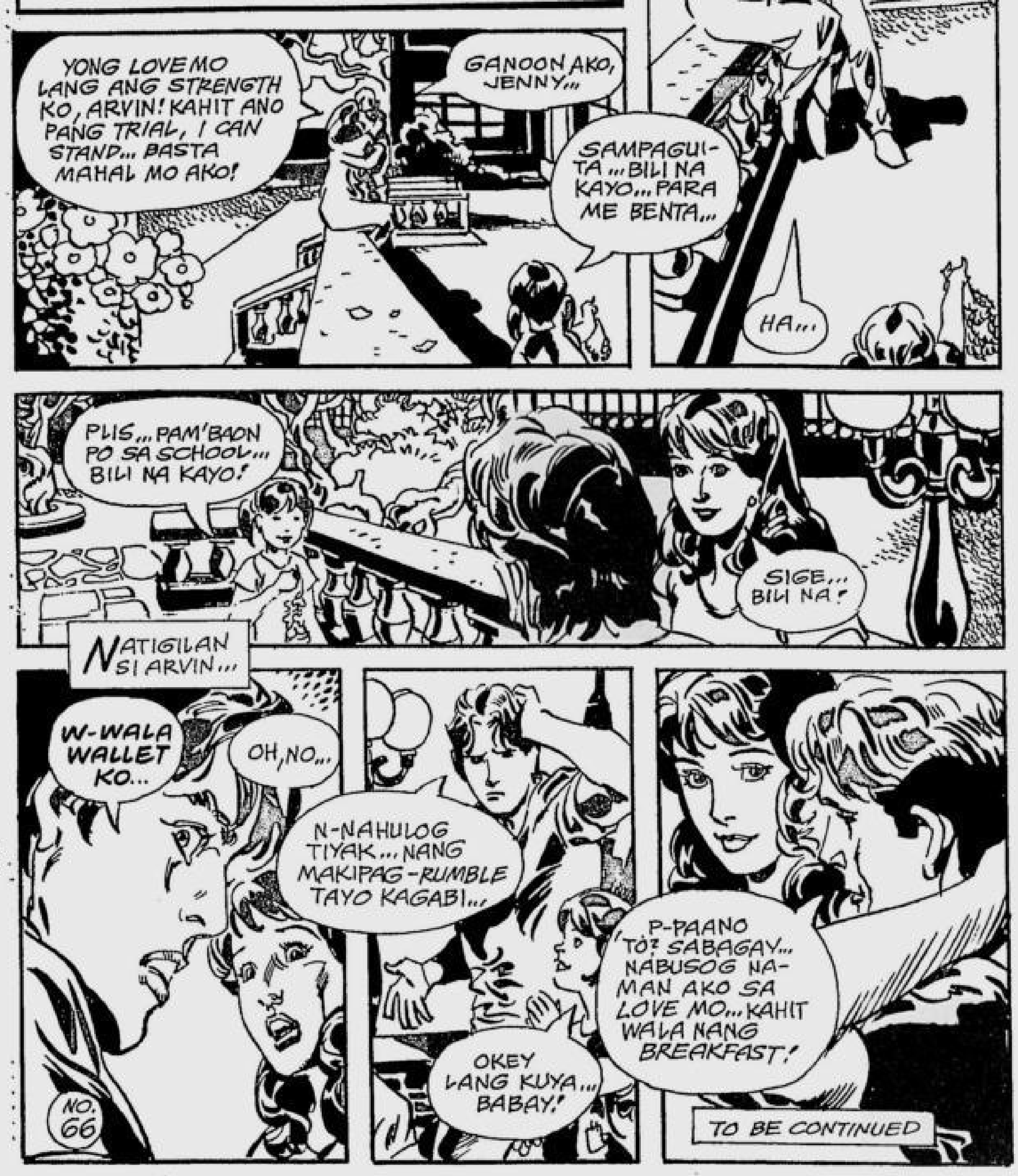
A diario novela by CARLO J. CAPARAS

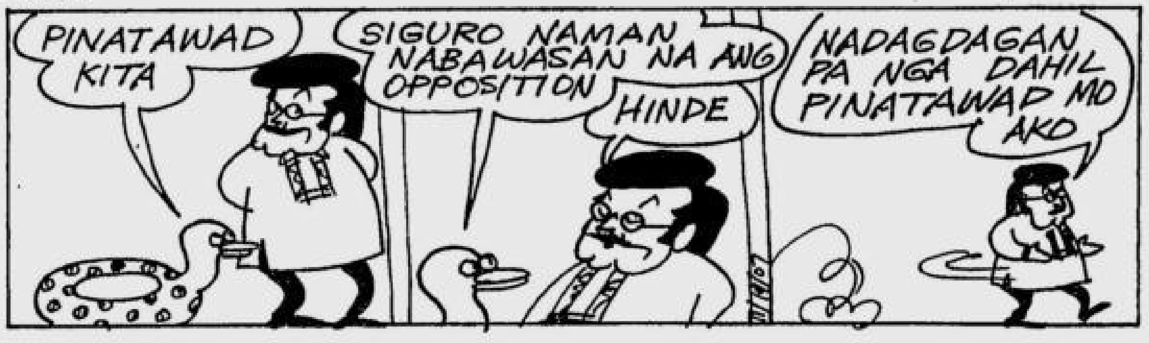
To have and to hold

Art: ARNEL A. AVETRIA


YONG LOVE MO LANG ANG STRENGTH KO, ARVIN! KAHIT ANO PANG TRIAL, I CAN STAND... BASTA MAHAL MO AKO!
GANOON AKO, JENNY...
SAMPAGUITA ...BILI NA KAYO...PARA ME BENTA...
HA...
PLIS... PAM'BAON PO SA SCHOOL... BILI NA KAYO!
SIGE... BILI NA!
NATIGILAN SI ARVIN...
W-WALA WALLET KO...
OH, NO...
N-NAHULOG TIYAK... NANG MAKIPAG-RUMBLE TAYO KAGABI...
OKEY LANG KUYA... BABAY!
P-PAANO 'TO? SABAGAY... NABUSOG NAMAN AKO SA LOVE MO... KAHIT WALA NANG BREAKFAST!
NO. 66
TO BE CONTINUED

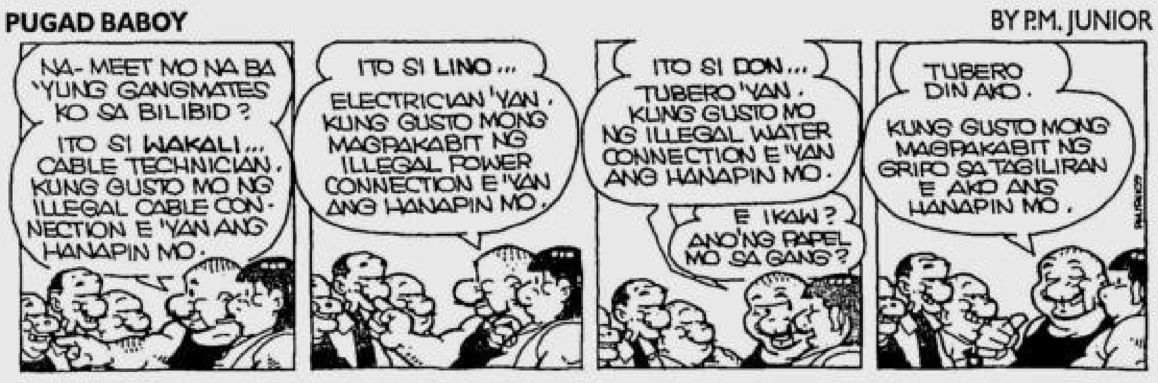
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


PINATAWAD KITA
SIGURO NAMAN NABAWASAN NA ANG OPPOSITION
HINDE
NADAGDAGAN PA NGA DAHIL PINATAWAD MO AKO

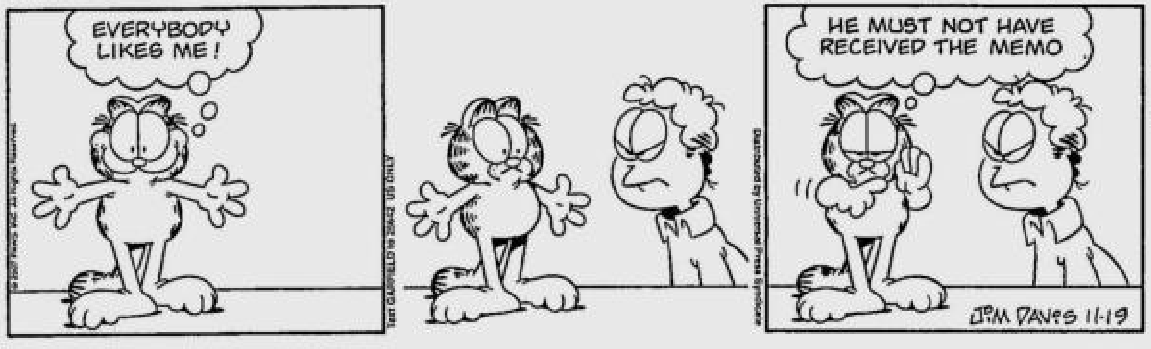
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


NA-MEET MO NA BA 'YUNG GANGMATES KO SA BILIBID?
ITO SI WAKALI... CABLE TECHNICIAN. KUNG GUSTO MO NG ILLEGAL CABLE CONNECTION E 'YAN ANG HANAPIN MO.
ITO SI LINO... ELECTRICIAN 'YAN. KUNG GUSTO MONG MAGPAKABIT NG ILLEGAL POWER CONNECTION E 'YAN ANG HANAPIN MO.
ITO SI DON... TUBERO 'YAN. KUNG GUSTO MO NG ILLEGAL WATER CONNECTION E 'YAN ANG HANAPIN MO.
E IKAW? ANO'NG PAPEL MO SA GANG?
TUBERO DIN AKO.
KUNG GUSTO MONG MAGPAKABIT NG GRIPO SA TAGILIRAN E AKO ANG HANAPIN MO.

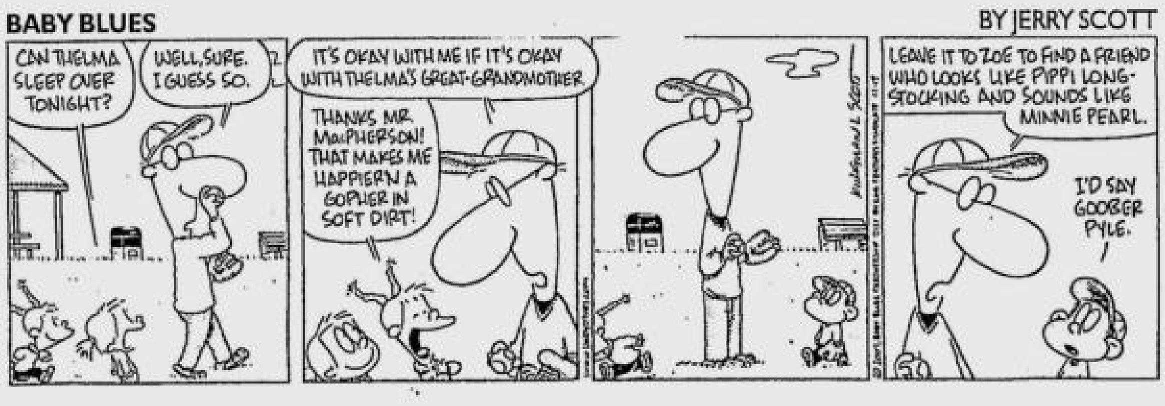
GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS


EVERYBODY LIKES ME!
HE MUST NOT HAVE RECEIVED THE MEMO
JIM DAVIS 11-19

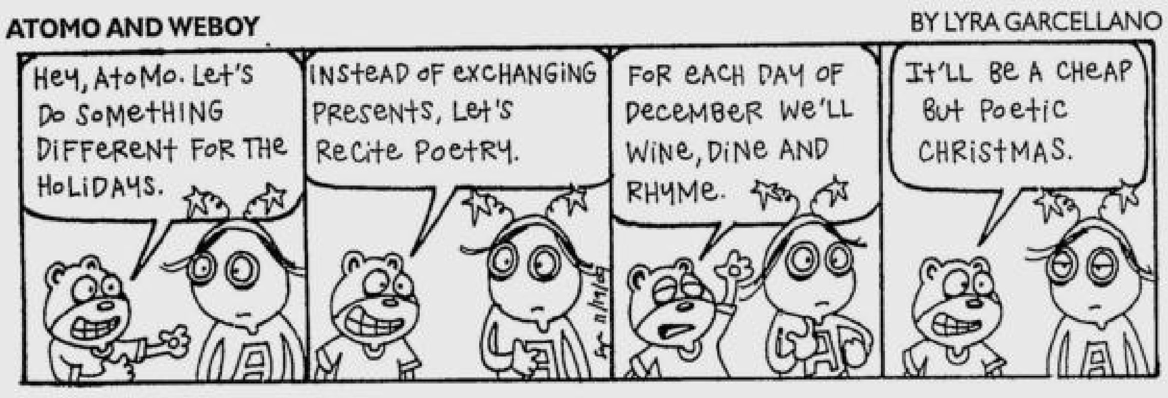
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


CAN THELMA SLEEP OVER TONIGHT?
WELL, SURE. I GUESS SO.
IT'S OKAY WITH ME IF IT'S OKAY WITH THELMA'S GREAT-GRANDMOTHER
THANKS MR. MacPHERSON! THAT MAKES ME HAPPIER'N A GOPHER IN SOFT DIRT!
LEAVE IT TO ZOE TO FIND A FRIEND WHO LOOKS LIKE PIPPI LONGSTOCKING AND SOUNDS LIKE MINNIE PEARL.
I'D SAY GOOBER PYLE.

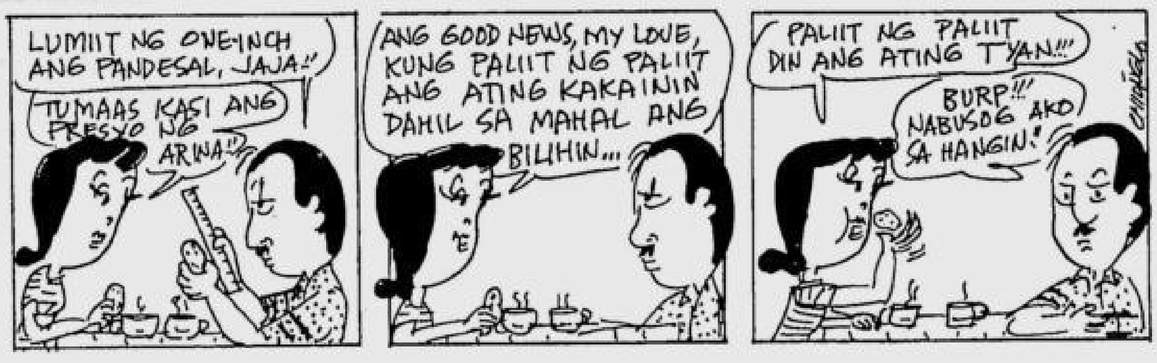
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Hey, AtoMo. Let's Do SoMetHING DiFFerent FoR The HoLiDAys.
InsteAD oF exCHANGiNG Presents, Let's ReCite PoetRy.
FoR eACH DAy oF DeceMBeR we'LL Wine, Dine AND RHyMe.
It'LL Be A CHeAP But Poetic CHRiStMAS.

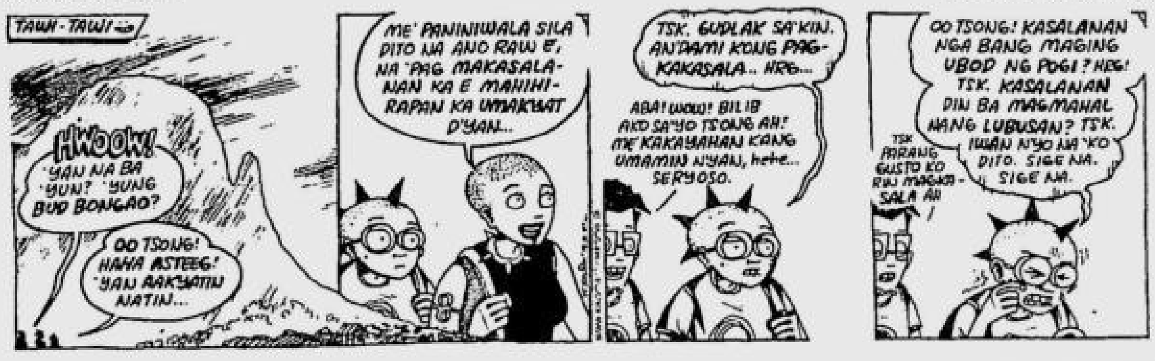
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


LUMIIT NG ONE-INCH ANG PANDESAL, JAJA!
TUMAAS KASI ANG PRESYO NG ARINA!
ANG GOOD NEWS, MY LOVE, KUNG PALIIT NG PALIIT ANG ATING KAKAININ DAHIL SA MAHAL ANG BILIHIN...
PALIIT NG PALIIT DIN ANG ATING TYAN!!!
BURP!!! NABUSOG AKO SA HANGIN!
CHIONGLO

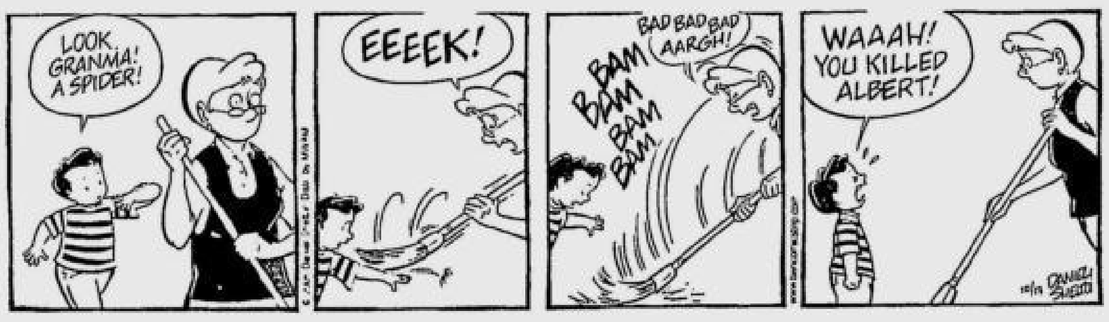
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA

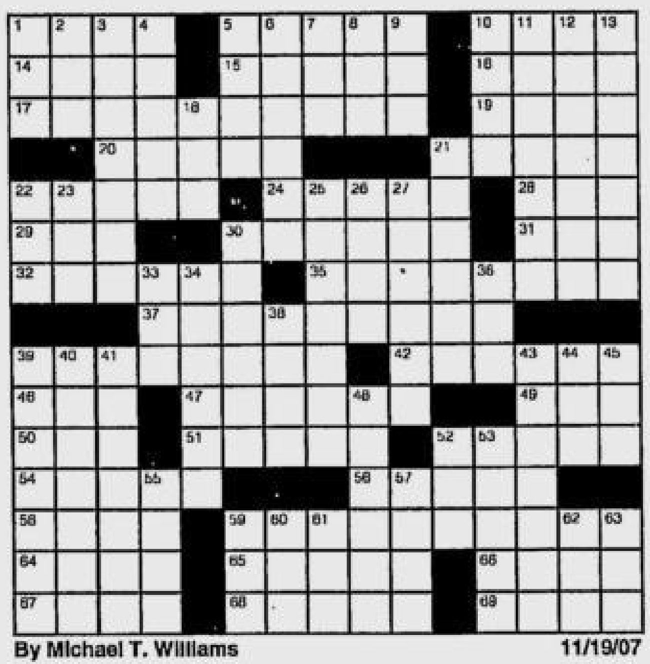

TAWI-TAWI
HWOOW! 'YAN NA BA 'YUN? 'YUNG BUD BONGAO?
OO TSONG! HAHA ASTEEG! 'YAN AAKYATIN NATIN...
ME' PANINIWALA SILA DITO NA ANO RAW E, NA 'PAG MAKASALANAN KA E MAHIHIRAPAN KA UMAKYAT D'YAN...
TSK. GUDLAK SA'KIN. AN'DAMI KONG PAGKAKASALA.. HRG...
ABA! WOW! BILIB AKO SA'YO TSONG AH! ME KAKAYAHAN KANG UMAMIN NYAN, hehe... SERYOSO.
OO TSONG! KASALANAN NGA BANG MAGING UBOD NG POGI? HEG! TSK. KASALANAN DIN BA MAGMAHAL NANG LUBUSAN? TSK. IWAN NYO NA 'KO DITO. SIGE NA. SIGE NA.
TSK PARANG GUSTO KO RIN MAGKASALA AH

BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


LOOK, GRANMA! A SPIDER!
EEEEK!
BAM BAM BAM BAM
BAD BAD BAD AARGH!
WAAAH! YOU KILLED ALBERT!

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Michael T. Williams
Clearwater, FL
11/19/07

ACROSS
1 Bangkok man
5 Throw a scene
10 Come again?
14 Dealer's delivery
15 Cold snap
16 Helps out
17 "Two Tickets to Paradise" singer
19 PC command
20 Fictional Montague
21 Sound of a wet impact
22 One of the Three Stooges
24 Pulverize
28 Finnish twins?
29 Harper Valley org. of song
30 Merchant
31 Top shot
32 Take on
35 Savors
37 "In Da Club" singer
39 Consisting of two names
42 Orchestral strings
46 NAFTA participant
47 Walking
49 Storm center
50 Destiny
51 Arrange
52 Young salmon
54 Andes animal
56 Gobbled up
58 Artist Salvador
59 "I Walk the Line" singer
64 Elevator pioneer
65 Flowed back
66 Fill too tightly
67 Turns right
68 Howdy of early TV
69 Attaches

DOWN
1 Pooh's middle name?
2 Hoodwinked
3 San __ Fault
4 Language nuance
5 Pinnacle
6 Pick
7 Can to a Brit
8 Glob ending?
9 Work at, as a trade
10 Big stinger
11 Racetrack near Miami
12 Forge ahead
13 Fearsome flies
18 HRE part
21 Hallowed place
22 Fancy tub
23 Elevs.
25 Gymnast Retton
26 Actor Guinness
27 Choose
30 Give meaning to
33 Craft of sci-fi
34 Brunch cocktail
36 Letters on Cardinal caps
38 Wilson's predecessor
39 Sleuth Drummond
40 Place alone
41 Actress Wood
43 Maltin or Nimoy
44 Popeye's Olive
45 Fixed
48 Bid first
52 Pig residence
53 Mohammed's birthplace
55 Fall to hit
57 Raggedy Ann's friend
59 Clampett patriarch
60 Seller's $$ equivocation
61 SHO rival
62 Low-spirited
63 "__ Pinafore"

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

C	U	P	O	F	T	E	A		E	R	A	S	E	R
A	P	O	P	L	E	X	Y		T	I	S	A	N	E
S	T	R	A	I	N	E	R		A	N	S	A	R	A
Q	U	I	L	T	S		E	G	G		I	R	A	S
U	R	N			E	S	S	I	E		G	I	G	S
E	N	G	L	I	S	H		G	R	A	N	N	I	E
			O	N	T	A	R	G	E	T		E	N	S
R	I	N	S	E		R	E	L		H	A	N	G	S
E	T	E		P	L	A	C	E	B	O	S			
W	A	S	H	T	U	B		R	A	S	H	A	D	S
A	L	T	I		S	L	U	S	H			T	E	E
R	I	E	N		T	E	N		R	E	S	O	L	E
D	A	G	G	E	R		R	E	A	S	O	N	E	R
E	N	G	I	N	E		I	N	I	T	I	A	T	E
D	O	S	S	E	S		P	A	N	E	L	L	E	D

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HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You are both a realist and a romantic. Ever the crusader, you will always fight for reform. You understand the use of power in the world. Family is important to you. You like to bring out the best in others. Work hard to build or construct something in the year ahead. Your rewards will soon follow!

Birthdate of: Calvin Klein, designer; Jodie Foster, actress; Larry King, TV interviewer.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You might feel strongly attracted to someone today. Relationships with others are not casual. You feel emotionally intense and excited about things.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You might be unusually assertive with co-workers today; conversely, others might get unusually bossy with you! (Take it easy.)

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Your romantic passions are aroused today. You might develop a crush on someone. If you are in a relationship, you feel very strongly about everything.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You might want to get your way with a family member today. Others might see you as coming on a bit too strong. It's just that you're excited about something and you want to see it done the way you want to see it done!

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You're unusually persuasive today. You can teach, sell or market anything to anyone. You want to convince others to agree with you.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You'll work hard to earn money today. However, you will work just as hard to spend it! You feel obsessed about doing something in financial terms. Be careful not to be too demanding.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): The spirit of compromise is hard to achieve today. Bosses and power types are demanding, and you are not in the mood to cooperate. Someone will have to give. It might be you.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You're not in the mood to hear other people go on about their religious or political beliefs. You have your thoughts, and you intend to keep them. (Try to live and let live.)

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You're extremely enthusiastic about getting groups or members or friends to endorse your ideas today. You want everybody to go along with what you think is right. But they might not agree! And so it goes.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Discord with others, especially bosses and parents, can arise today because hidden tensions suddenly surface. You feel you've been putting up with something for too long.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You're set to rally the troops today. You see a better way of doing things, and you want others to agree. Tally ho!

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Relationships definitely can heat up today. This could be a romantic passion, or it just could be a plain, old-fashioned disagreement. Your choice.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis SudoKu By Dave Green

8		2	9	6	7	4		
	4			1		7		
5							9	6
6					9			4
1	7						5	8
2			4					7
3	5							1
		9		2			4	
		1	3	7	8	5		9

Difficulty Level ★ 11/19

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

2	9	7	4	3	6	8	5	1
8	6	5	7	1	2	9	3	4
1	3	4	5	9	8	7	2	6
3	5	2	6	8	4	1	9	7
6	1	9	2	7	3	4	8	5
4	7	8	1	5	9	3	6	2
9	4	6	8	2	7	5	1	3
5	2	3	9	4	1	6	7	8
7	8	1	3	6	5	2	4	9

Difficulty Level ★★★★★ 11/18

Filipino play on maids opens in Singapore

By James P. Ong
Contributor

REAL-LIFE Singapore domestic helpers Doreen Dangca, Rose Sarador and Nenita de Torres

"The Tales of Three Marias" is written, directed and mounted by Singapore-based Filipino thespian and dramatist Jay Españo

SINGAPORE—A FILIPINO PLAY about Filipino migrant maids played by actual Filipino maids went onstage yesterday, Nov. 18, in Singapore.

The play, written, directed and mounted by Singapore-based Filipino thespian and dramatist Jay Españo, opened in a Filipino restaurant here, proof of the growing migrant Filipino presence as well as the widening Filipino artistic and cultural influence in the Lion City.

Singapore has been trying to add another aspect to its self-billing as a leading business and cosmopolitan capital in Asia. Aiming to become an arts and culture center in the region, it has constructed the Esplanade (a sort of Sydney Opera House or Cultural Center of the Philippines) as a venue for the performing arts.

It has been importing expensive Western musical products, the latest of which is the West End version of the Walt Disney film "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang."

Singapore's art scene has also seen the growth of art galleries which have imported Filipino artists to exhibit their works. Last month, Edwin Wilwayco's abstract show "Scherzo" opened at Momentous Arts. On Thursday (Nov. 15), Farley del Rosario opened a show at Utterly Art. Both were well-received shows.

The performing arts have also seen great Filipino contributions, with stage performers from Manila such as soprano Rachelle Gerodias and baritone Andrew Fernando being invited here to perform in classical concerts.

First splash

Españo himself had first penetrated the Singapore stage as an imported performer in Manila. His first big splash here was playing half of the famous Siamese twins in the musical production "Chang and Eng." The other half was played by another Filipino, RJ Rosales.

The idea of coming up with a play about Filipino maids in Singapore began playing in his mind last year after he conducted an acting workshop for the Filipino community here.

Españo, 33, finally saw his project come to life as he mounted "The Tales of Three Marias," about Filipino domestic helpers living in Singapore.

Three real-life maids share the lead roles. They were not really trained to act, because it was an episodic play of three monologues interspersed with music and video.

"I wanted them to be themselves. I didn't want them to act," explains Españo. "It was really amazing just to hear them talk about their lives. There were times they cried, but most of the time we laughed really heartily. That's what's fascinating about Filipinos, we can always laugh at ourselves and find ways to overcome adversity."

"The Tales of Three Marias," says Españo, who is writer, director and producer, is about "the dreams, frustrations and happiness of maids here. The play is in Filipino, but with English subtitles."

He's hoping to get sponsors so he can stage it in a bigger venue next year.

"I am also aiming to get the nod of international theater festival people to fund the show and bring it abroad," he says.

Giving back

As is the fashion in predominantly Catholic Philippines, the characters are all named Maria, after the Virgin Mary.

Maria Soledad Padua, played by Doreen Dangca, is an abused maid who ends up killing her employer out of revenge.

Maria Dolores Dimarucut, played by Nenite de Torres, is a veteran maid in Singapore and a single mother who is suffering an identity crisis: Is she still Filipino or an adopted Singaporean?

Finally, there is Maria Corazon Parungao, played by Rose Sarador, a perky young lady whose real dream is to migrate to America.

"It was really tough writing the script because there were so many stories that I wanted to tell, each of them very unique," says Españo, who talked to over 50 domestic helpers working here. "I wouldn't really call it an interview, maybe more like a chat session. They just opened up and I didn't really have a hard time drawing insights from them."

But it did take time to find someone willing to act the roles since rehearsals were held on Sundays, a rest day for maids here.

"My original actors were from the acting workshop that I conducted, but a lot of things happened along the way. For example, one of them had to fly to Denmark suddenly because she was able to find a new employer. So I had to find a replacement—and that was quite a strenuous task," he says.

Españo, an accomplished actor from Manila, has appeared in several theater, TV and movie productions both here and in the Philippines. He has performed over 40 plays in the last 12 years, ranging from musicals to classical and contemporary theater.

He first arrived in Singapore in 2001 for the production of "Chang and Eng, The Musical," where he was understudy for the role of Eng.

Dubbed in Singapore as Philippine theater's "Perennial Romantic Lead," Españo also hosted "Batibot," and has toured the Philippines teaching speech and drama to kids and teens.

"When I came to Singapore and started doing gigs for the Filipino community, the domestic helpers were my No. 1 supporters. I guess it's my way of giving back something to them," he says.

STAGE and TV actor Jay Españo in the Singapore production of "Once on This Island"

JULIA Abueva as Little Red Riding Hood, Menchu Lauchengco-Yulo as The Baker's Wife and Michael Williams as The Baker

LYNN Sherman (center) as The Witch

Tales as old as time, now retold in song

From page E1

some lines of their laugh tracks, but it's a good tradeoff for the greater sense of empathy that the musical generates.

The Narrator, typically an Old Man, is now played by a smart, stylishly dressed young woman (Missy Maramara), underlining the contemporary bent of this version. The smaller staging, too, scales down the visual sprawl, giving this "Into the Woods" a fair semblance of chamber intimacy.

In Gino Gonzales' giant playhouse of a set, the fairy-tale characters have become real people, hemmed in by recognizable regrets, restrictions and dead-end expectations.

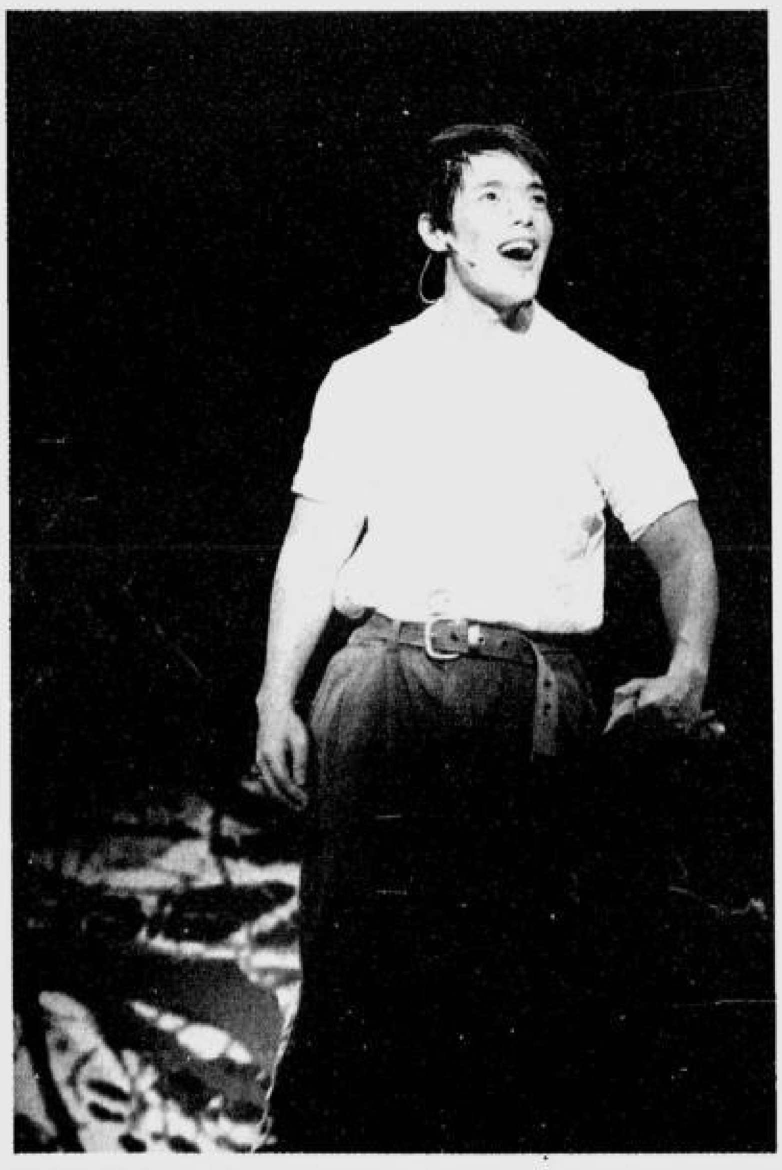
In particular, the central roles of the child-desiring Baker and Baker's Wife, superbly played by Michael Williams and Menchu Lauchengco-Yulo, evince a deep humanity, much helped along by the two actors' seamless chemistry and gleaming voices.

Williams is notably moving in "No More," where he squares off dramatically with his estranged father (Tommy Abuel, wearing his gravitas light and easy).

A couple of young actors shine just as brightly as these veterans. Joaqui Valdes and Julia Abueva, both newcomers to Sondheim, are standouts as Jack and Red Riding Hood, respectively.

Jack's coming-of-age song "Giants in the Sky" receives an engagingly bittersweet reading from Valdes. Abueva, meanwhile, all crisp precociousness and self-assurance, convinces you her Red Riding Hood can, indeed, survive ravishment by the Wolf (Jamie Wilson, also Cinderella's Prince).

CATHY Azanza as Cinderella



JOAQUI Valdes as Jack

Ah, Wilson: he's one of a couple of casting choices you could cavil about. Wilson is a first-rate actor, something he displays to flamboyant, lascivious effect as the Wolf.

However, he's not been blessed with the best pipes around. Which means that "Agony," the made-for-laughs duet sung by Cinderella's Prince and Rapunzel's Prince (John Mulhall) is an exercise in bated breath for the audience.

Will Wilson croak? He doesn't; he merely holds his top notes unsteadily. Mulhall carries the moment with his polished sound. But even in this, Wilson flashes more presence and personality.

Cast against type

As The Witch, Lynn Sherman's textured, smoky voice works overtime with songs that promiscuously roam the scales, from her rap-like number in the prologue to the harrowing ballad "Stay with Me" and the soulful "Lament" in Act II.

A touch of laboriousness informs these numbers, but Sherman, cast against the usual type for this role (the regal Lauchengco-Yulo played the part in the 1992 Repertory Philippines production, and Bernadette Peters and Vanessa Williams did it on Broadway), by and large delivers.

Complementing her contralto are two sparkling sopranos, Cathy Azanza as a winning Cinderella and Angela Padilla as Rapunzel. Juno Henares is a scenery-chewing blast as Cinderella's stepmother.

Unfortunately, Madeleine Nicolas—an accomplished actress who made her mark in Filipino-language plays and *zarzuelas*—still seems on tentative footing as Jack's mother, though her comic putdowns often fly.

'Overgrown' book

About the only complaint one could have of this production is that its sublime payoff comes after a nearly three-hour running time.

"As overgrown as the forest" was how the former New York Times drama critic Frank Rich described the musical's book (its spoken lines). True—though when one arrives at "Into the Woods'" most magical juncture, the argument becomes moot.

The moment in question is "No One Is Alone," when the Baker, Jack, Red Riding Hood and Cinderella, all now bereft of loved ones, begin the process of reaching out to each other and contemplating lives as new-found friends ("Mother cannot guide you/Now you're on your own/Only me beside you/Still you're not alone...")

Williams, Valdes, Abueva and Azanza, their voices blending in impeccable harmony, create a scene of magnificent aural and emotional splendor—one of those spine-shivering moments in theater when you tell yourself, "I'm damn lucky to be here."

For a show of sustained excellence capped by that profound moment, polite *"Keri na"* applause won't do. Only a full-scale ovation will.

"Into The Woods" runs until Dec. 8 at Music Museum. Call NVC at 8896695, 8965497, 8990630, 8919999 or visit www.newvoicecompany.com

E-mail the author at gcadiz@inquirer.com.ph, visit www.gibbscadiz.com

Centennial music awardees at St. Cecilia's Concert

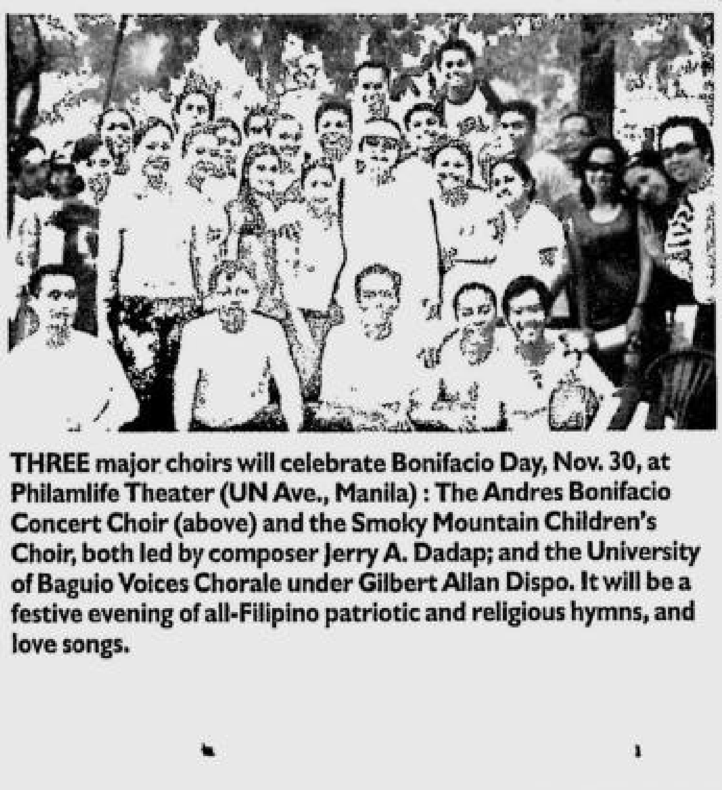
THE ST. SCHOLASTICA'S School of Music's centennial celebration, will feature recently honored music awardees on Nov. 25, 5 p.m.

The awardees are Zenas Lozada, Solo Artist Awardee for Performance; Mary Anne Armovit, Della Besa and Anamaria de Guzman, Duo Artist Awardees for Performance; and Cristina Bichara and Menchu Padilla, Awardees for Music Development. They are joined by Mary Anne Espina, Rosemarie de la Paz, Marianne Fajardo, Jane Banta and faculty member Greg Zuñiega performing piano compositions by N. Gallardo, R. Cayabyab, Bizet-Wilburg and George Gershwin.

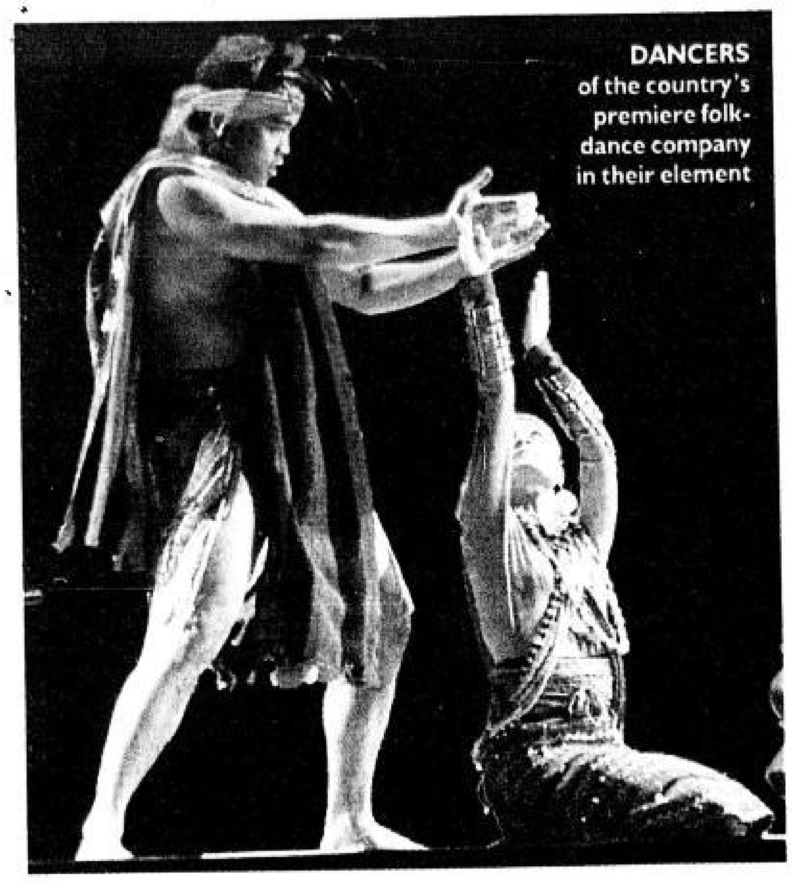
Violinists Sara Gonzales, Denise Huang, DJ Salonga and Gina Medina will perform Vivaldi's Concertos Nos. 1 and 4 for Four Violins and Strings.

The finale will be George Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" with pianists Espina, Besa, De Guzman and Zuñiega. The Manila Symphony Orchestra will provide orchestral accompaniment, with Jeoffrey Solares conducting.

For ticket inquiries, call 5268080.



THREE major choirs will celebrate Bonifacio Day, Nov. 30, at Philamlife Theater (UN Ave., Manila) : The Andres Bonifacio Concert Choir (above) and the Smoky Mountain Children's Choir, both led by composer Jerry A. Dadap; and the University of Baguio Voices Chorale under Gilbert Allan Dispo. It will be a festive evening of all-Filipino patriotic and religious hymns, and love songs.



DANCERS of the country's premiere folk-dance company in their element

Viva Bayanihan!

By Pablo A. Tariman
Contributor

BEFORE CECILE LICAD CONQUERED New York in the late 1980s with her auspicious debut with the New York Philharmonic, and before Lea Salonga invaded Broadway with her acclaimed roles in "Miss Saigon" and "Les Miz," there was the unforgettable advent of the Bayanihan Dance Company in the late '50s, early '60s and onward.

We got to recall the folk-dance company's world conquest through Chary Lagdameo, president of the Bayanihan Alumni Association Inc., who spearheaded a grand reunion of Bayanihan dancers when it observed its golden anniversary recently.

Among the illustrious soloists of the Bayanihan is the late Rome-based soprano Lilia Reyes and the Canada-based soprano Eleanor Calbes, one of the few singers who got rave reviews as a soloist of the Toronto Symphony and the very first to land on Broadway, way before Lea Salonga.

For the record, the Bayanihan was the first Philippine folk-dance group to get the attention of the world's foremost impresario, Sul Hurok, who booked the ensemble on Broadway. It got rave notices alongside other Broadway attractions.

Fifty years later and during the recent reunion, we got to meet Rosalinda Anido Gomez, the first dancer who essayed the Princess part in "Singkil," which is one of the most applauded numbers on the Bayanihan repertoire.

When "Singkil" was first performed in Winter Garden Theater in New York on Oct. 14, 1959, courtesy of Hurok, it received 14 curtain calls, "Pandanggo sa Ilaw," which ended the section on Regional Variations, only got two curtain calls.

The New York conquest got rave reviews from dance critic Walter Terry (Herald Tribune) and John Martin (New York Times).

The success of "Singkil" when it was performed in Brussels also resulted in the release of limited-edition "Singkil" figurines.

Another Bayanihan member who made good is Joji Ramirez-Castro, who migrated to San Diego in 1985 and founded the Philippine Performing Arts Company where the Bayanihan choreographies are preserved in their original versions.

It was inevitable that other dance groups abroad would stage Philippine dances without the benefit of the research and expertise of the Bayanihan pioneers and ended up restaging Philippine folk dances with bastardized ethnic music and costumes.

"I do preserve the original Bayanihan choreographies and I don't tamper with the original costumes just to cater to the new audiences," said Castro.

Lagdameo, Gomez and Castro and their co-alumni had one great time during the reunion.

Joy of Music Festival

In my book, the best thing Hong Kong can offer to arts enthusiasts is not the kid-friendly Disneyland but the yearly Joy of Music Festival initiated by the Chopin Society of Hong Kong, with Dr. Andrew and Anabella Freris at its helm.

The honorary president of the Society is a big name in music—none other than pianist-conductor Vladimir Ashkenazy.

Since 1999, the group has launched a series of recitals, among them the Winners Series which featured top prizewinners of prestigious music competitions; and the Masters Series which presented legendary musicians who also conducted workshops and master classes on top of being concert attractions themselves.

What is unique about this Society is that it believes classical music is neither an elitist nor a minority interest in Hong Kong, and Hong Kong audiences deserve nothing but the highest quality of music-making the international music scene can offer.

In 2005, the Society initiated its biggest event, the First Hong Kong International Piano Competition, the first Grand Prize winner of which was Russian pianist Ilya Rashkovskiy, whose Manila debut last year caused pandemonium at Philamlife Theater.

After winning in Hong Kong, Rashkovskiy made it to the top two winners of the Marguerite Long-Jacques Thibaud Competition in Paris; and this year as one of the top four winners of the Queen Elizabeth International Music Competition in Brussels.

Last year, the Society launched its own recording label, Alpha Omega Sound. Among the first releases were previously unknown live performances by Heifetz, Kogan, Arrau and Segovia.

Two of the top attractions of the 2007 Hong Kong Joy of Music Festival are the concerts of sensational classical guitarist Alvaro Pierri, who will team up with pianist Pascal Roge and the London Chamber Orchestra on Dec. 11 at the Hong Kong City Hall Concert Hall; and the solo recital of Rashkovskiy at the Hong Kong City Hall Concert Hall on Dec. 14.

For those who cannot afford to go to Hong Kong, the good news is that Pierri and Rashkovskiy will be heard in Manila a week before their Hong Kong engagements.

"It is a great pleasure to share world-class artists performing in Hong Kong with the music-lovers of Manila," said Anabella Freris during her latest Manila visit.

For remaining tickets to the Manila engagements of Pierri and Rashkovskiy on Dec. 4 and 8, call 9007023 or cell 0906-5104270.

Here and there

The National Music Competition for Young Artists (Namcya), through its program director Ramon Acoymo, recently announced the finalists who will compete in the final round of the competition on Nov. 24 at the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

Those who participated in the semifinals, and even those who did not qualify for the finals, were given special workshops and coaching sessions, in accordance with Namcya's new thrust at being a more collaborative and constructive experience for young artists.

Finalists in Piano Category C are Stephanie Alexis Aretola Cruz (Region IV-A); Andrew Bryan Sapigao (NCR); Farley Florentino Asuncion (NCR); Juan Michael Sargado (NCR); Josiah Samaniego (NCR); and Darren Elias Matias (NCR).

In the Solo Voice Category C, the finalists are Phoebe Ebona (Region X); Rexceluz Evangelista (NCR); Nomher Narita Nival (NCR); Joseleo Logdat (NCR); Ferleoni Medina (NCR); Jeffrey Buensuceso (NCR); Paolo Roel Rodriguez (NCR); Maria Blanca Krystal Buesa (NCR); and Eric Ferrer (Region III). More winners next week.

Meanwhile, San Pablo City is using the arts to promote tourist destinations in Southern Tagalog. The idyllic and quiet ambience of Casa San Pablo, managed by Boots and Ann Mercado Alcantara, will be the venue of an intimate concert by flutist Jay Gomez and pianist Katherine Fernandez on Saturday, Nov. 24. The concert is packaged to include overnight accommodation and breakfast. Call 0918-9386018.

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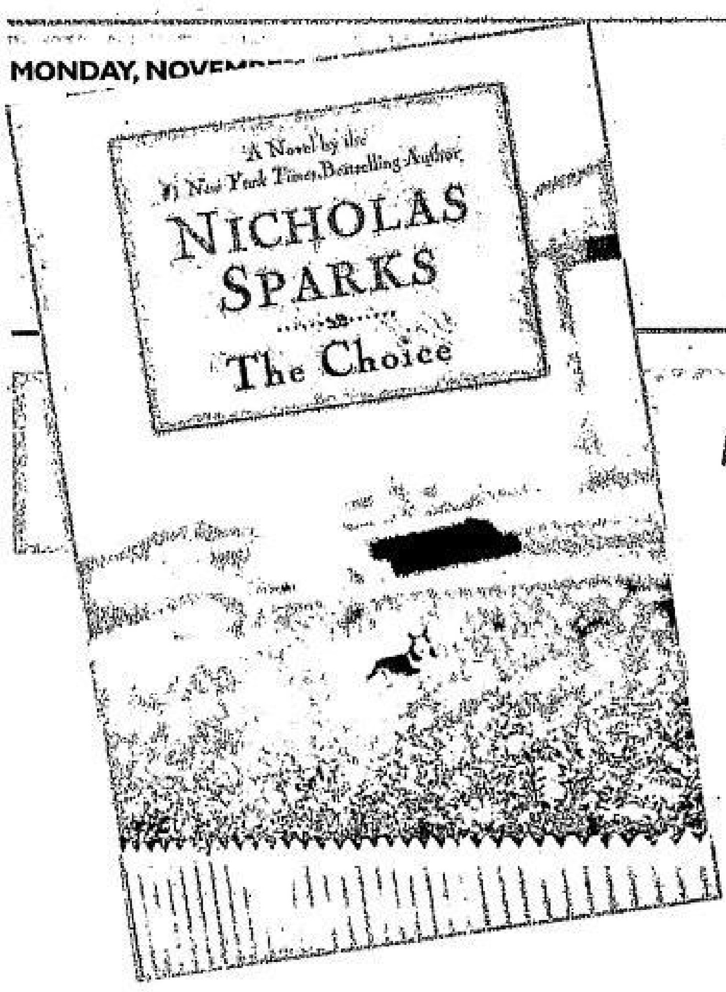


Too easy a 'Choice'

Nicholas Sparks' new novel is proof positive that his books have become the instant noodles of the fiction world

By Ruel S. De Vera

THAT THERE IS SO MUCH irony in Nicholas Sparks' newest novel, "The Choice" (Grand Central Publishing, New York, 2007, 272 pages), is ironic. Sparks has always been a most efficient but one-dimensional author, with his romances being all so similar and predictable.

Yet "The Choice" actually begins with these words: "Stories are as unique as the people who tell them, and the best stories are those in which the ending is a surprise."

Add to that the fact that "The Choice" is Sparks' 13th book, and is already a best-seller list mainstay, and you have a situation that is too much like the convenient coincidences that Sparks employs in his books. After all, Sparks has gained a massive following by crafting accessible tales about lovers with a twist, all wrapped in a thin book with a bizarrely obvious title.

In fact, three of his earliest books, "Message in a Bottle," "A Walk to Remember" and "The Notebook," were transformed into motion-picture tearjerkers, while a fourth, "Nights in Rodanthe," is forthcoming.

In many ways, Sparks is successful because his readers know what to expect from him. His romances have become comfortable and expected, in a way reflecting what one of "The Choice's" protagonists likes in a meal: "He became timid about food in general, preferring plain and predictable to anything with exotic flavor... He was too afraid to change."

Unbelievable

Thus "The Choice" is vintage Sparks all the way, featuring two impossibly single people somehow crossing paths. Just how unbelievable is this book? The two main characters answer to the improbably attractive names Travis Parker and Gabby Holland, who become neighbors in the picturesque town of Beaufort, North Carolina.

Travis happens to be a handsome, chiseled, parasailing veterinarian with a loyal dog named Moby. The owner of a similarly loyal dog named Molly, Gabby is a quirkily beautiful physician's assistant who doesn't realize how beautiful she is. The two carry enormous baggage and, of course, are made for each other.

"Both aware that they were sitting across from a person who might change the course of their lives forever if they weren't careful," Sparks writes. Then, as always, something goes terribly wrong, and there is guilt, sorrow and faith to be dealt with.

Their story is told in two parts, over a decade apart, with the earlier portion over twice as long as the later chapter, something it has in common with "The Notebook."

The characters have the unnerving habit of breaking out into densely expository paragraphs. Readers familiar with Sparks' work will no doubt try to figure out early what this "choice" in the book's title is, and Sparks gamely throws them red herrings, but ultimately the aforementioned choice is exactly what most readers will think it is.

Pretty phrase

That's perhaps the most frustrating thing about Sparks' work. He knows how to keep those pages turning, and is capable of placing a pretty phrase right where it should be. As the first part of "The Choice" will show, he can whip up a fantastic romance full of delightful little details.

But his books have become so formulaic, so obvious that readers will be able to guess correctly every single plot twist before it happens. The biggest twist is so badly telegraphed that readers will be muttering to themselves as they turn the page: "You have got to be kidding me!"

Sparks fans who want to see more of the usual will not be disappointed by "The Choice."

In many ways, it is the perfect Sparks book, and it should come as no surprise that it is also a book that seems practically made for the movies. For other readers, it will be a trip down Memory Lane that they've memorized.

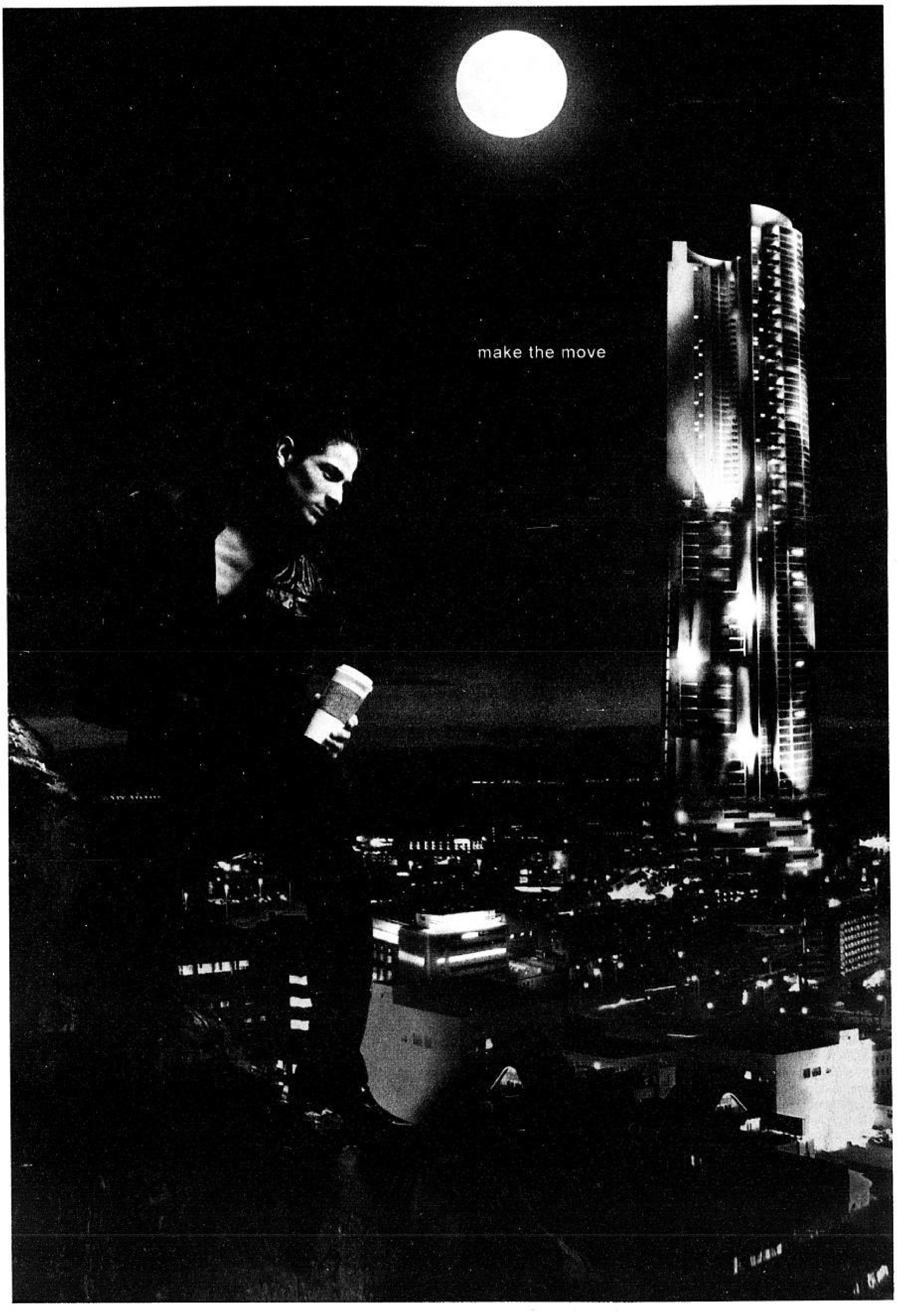
Even with franchises and series, readers should be challenged now and then; authors need to challenge them.

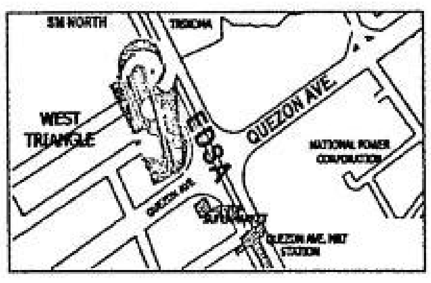
This particular choice is just too easy, too obvious, too preposterous to anyone who doesn't want the easy, obvious and preposterous.

"The Choice" thus stands as proof positive that Nicholas Sparks' books have, indeed, become the instant noodles of the fiction world: Just add some waterworks and you've got what you came for, even if it isn't really good for you.

Available in paperback at National Book Store.

www.gaskysuites.com





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A toast to fathers

The book features a photo collection of 62 men plus touching personal stories related by their children

Our Father
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JUN DE LEON

"OUR FATHER," by Jun de Leon

ACE PHOTOGRAPHER Jun de Leon's latest coffee-table book gives recognition to the unsung men in our lives: Daddy, Papa, Tatay.

"Our Father," featuring a photo collection of 62 inspiring men including national leaders, businessmen, professionals, activists, actors, musicians and military, captures the beauty and quiet strength of a father's love through photographs and stories related by the subjects' children.

The 144-page book represents the fulfillment of a dream project De Leon conceptualized 19 years ago, during a time when he was painfully separated from his then 5-year-old daughter Nina.

He recalls: "Nothing in the world, not even the growing recognition of my identity as a photographer, could quell the overwhelming pain of separation."

He sought to find the father image through doing what he did best: taking photographs of fathers

The "Dear Nina Project," as he called it, didn't pan out at the time and was shelved.

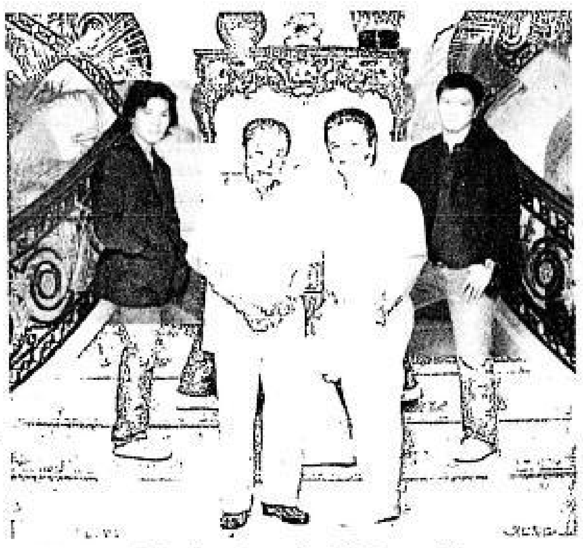
Through the years, De Leon eventually developed close relationships with his children. With renewed passion, and finding supportive partners in Creo Publishing, the lensman revisited his dream project this year.

For "Our Father," he squeezed in as many as four photo shoots a day, unmindful of the time and place. This enthusiasm shows another side of him, this time as a father and a storyteller sharing common ground with his subjects.

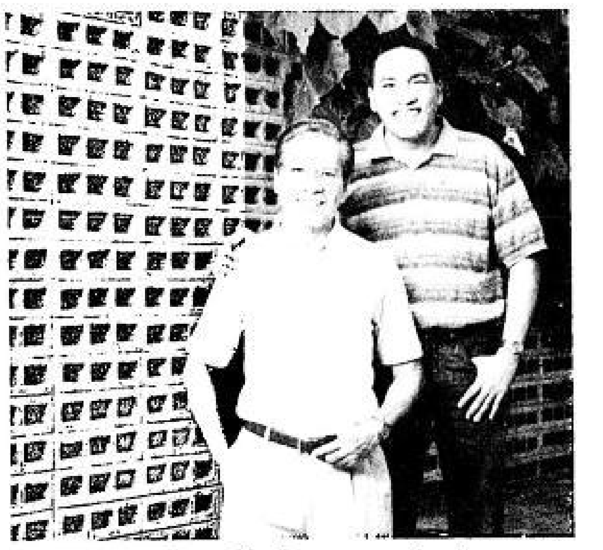
AGA Muhlach with twins Atasha and Andres

The 13x13-inch hardbound coffee-table photography book comes with an audio CD containing a song dedicated to all fathers, performed by Martin Nievera and arranged by Louie Ocampo.

Fathers featured in the glossy pages of the book are: Frank Alba, Butch Albert, Edgar Ang, Joey Antonio, Ninoy Aquino Jr. (deceased), Jaime Ayala, Senen Bacani, Ruben Bangayan, Andy Bautista, Sonny Belmonte, Eking Benedicto, Ely Buendia, Kenneth Cobonpue, Angel Colmenares, Joey Concepcion, RC Constantino, FF Cruz, Philip Cu-unjieng, Art de Castro, Freddie Dy, Lauren Dyogi, Patxi Elizalde, Chiz Escudero, RJ Esteban, Bayani Fernando, Mark Gan, David Guerrero, Juan Gullem, Atom Henares, Robert Ho, Roland Hortaleza, Butch Jimenez, Johnlu Koa, Michel Lhuillier, Samie Lim, Gabby Lopez, Guilly Luchangco, Dennis Manzano, Tony Meloto, Aga Muhlach, Kit Narciso, Martin Nievera, Satur Ocampo, Robin Padilla, Jun Palafox, Cecilio Pedro, Jun Pelaez, Ricardo Po, Alex Prieto, Charlie Rufino, Joel Santos, Wash SyCip, Jesus Tambunting, Lucio Tan, Ato Tanmantiong, Donnie Tantoco, Wig Tysmans, Fred Uytengsu Sr., Gary Valenciano, Eddie Villanueva, Manny Villar and Buddy Zamora.



FF Cruz and Co. Inc. founder FF Cruz with son Philip and grandsons Macky and Ipe



BAYAN Muna Party List Representative Satur Ocampo with son Anto

The life of a pastor uncovered

"Alfredo Verzosa, Obispo"
Missionary Catechists of the Sacred Heart and Ericson Josue
2007, 231 pages

ONCE, SEMINARIAN ERICSON Josue was paying a cursory visit in Vigan's Cathedral of the Conversion of St. Paul when he happened upon a marker declaring that a bishop of Lipa, Batangas, was there entombed, along with the mortal remains of an Ilocos prelate.

Josue's initial wonder regarding the reason behind this bishop's exile far from his territorial jurisdiction would become a full-blown investigation covering hundreds of miles and over half a decade of painstaking research..

The result, Josue's theologate thesis, is now the biography "Alfredo Verzosa, Obispo," which he published together with the Missionary Catechists of the Sacred Heart.

Josue, now a priest of the Laoag diocese, takes the reader back to times of upheaval, as the story of Verzosa, a member of Vigan's old aristocracy, begins toward the turn of the last century and ends after the World War II.

In a country central to the spread of Catholicism in Asia, Batangas and the Ilocos Region played substantial roles. Verzosa, the fourth Filipino Roman Catholic bishop and the first from the Ilocos, was one of the first wave of Filipino priests elevated to the episcopacy. He led the opening prayer during the convention that formulated the Philippine Constitution of 1935.

Fiery orator

Verzosa was actively involved with several religious orders and movements in pursuit of his ministry. In the Ilocos, his contemporaries included Isabelo de los Reyes and Gregorio Aglipay.

The young Fr. Verzosa, who was a fiery orator and prolific author of catechism material, is said to have successfully countered the Ilocano schismatic movement while assigned at the Augustinian-held parish of Bantay in Ilocos Sur.

After being named bishop, he brought the Missionaries of the Divine Word (SVDs), Carmelites, Redemptorists, and the Daughters of St. Paul to Lipa. Josue credits him with inviting the Madres Adoratrices, more popularly known as the Pink Sisters, to come to the Philippines. The Pink Sisters first settled in Lipa in 1923.

In the same year, the Vatican approved Verzosa's founding of the Congregation of the Blessed Virgin Mary for Christian education, now the Missionary Catechists of the Sacred Heart.

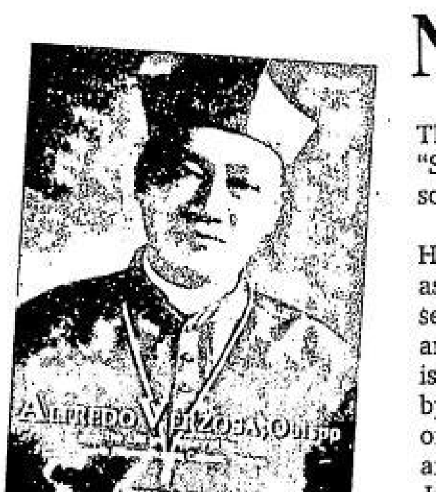
Under his watch, the young diocese also saw the rise of Catholic educational institutions, including at least four inter-diocesan seminaries, even during the war. It is an unprecedented feat unmatched until now.

For this, Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales describes him as a "mentor of priests." Cebu Archbishop Ricardo Cardinal Vidal was a product of this formation drive by Bishop Verzosa.

Lipa 'miracles'

The Lipa of Verzosa's time, affirms Cardinal Rosales in the foreword, was an exceptional local Church. Josue inevitably touches on the circumstances surrounding the alleged Lipa apparitions of the Virgin Mary to Carmelite novice Teresa Castillo in 1948, which happened toward the end of Verzosa's ministry in the diocese.

He doubts, however, that this led to the bishop's involuntary resignation in 1950, citing accounts of the bishop's prudence in managing the situation. Today, the "miracles" are officially discredited following a Church commission's investigation, although there are efforts to reopen the case.



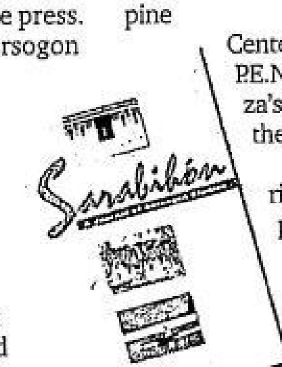
Josue's book also provides information on the formation and restructuring of dioceses (territorial divisions of the Catholic Church); the building of notable churches and seminaries; the movement of the ecclesiastical hierarchy and major religious orders such as the Dominicans and Jesuits in the Philippines; as well as the ravaging effects of World War II on the Church.

But more than a show of Ilocano pride in the life and legacy of Verzosa, "Obispo" gives readers valuable insights into the workings of Church policy, politics and a glorious ministry, as well as a glimpse of Philippine history.

"Alfredo Verzosa, Obispo" was printed by the Baguio Allied Printers. For inquiries, contact the Missionary Catechists of the Sacred Heart.

New 'Sarabihon'

THE FIFTH VOLUME OF "Sarabihon," a journal for Sorsogon students, is off the press.



Published by the Sorsogon Heritage Society, an association of researchers, artists, and journalists, the issue carries articles by Francisco Datar on birth seasonality and Reynaldo Jamoralin on the first Mass in Luzon (claimed to be first celebrated in Magallanes); folklore studies on nonsense rhymes by Azucena G. Uranza; and verbal abuse by Minerva Mañalac and Cecilia Canon-Socrates.

It also features Eugenia Duran Apostol's acceptance speech of the Ramon Magsaysay Award and her Rizal Lecture delivered at the national conference of the Philippine Center of International P.E.N., as well as Uranza's keynote address at the same forum.

The issue also carries personal essays, poems by Cesar Mella, a short story by Oscar Peralta and the never-before-published *zarzuela* "Pagkamoot sa Banuang Tinoboan" by Asisclo Jimenez, the master *zarzuelista* of Sorsogon.

The Society wishes to announce that "Sarabihon Vol. 1," long out of print, is now available, and that Vol. 6 will be out this month.

National Book Week Nov. 24-30

THE NATION OBSERVES THE 73rd National Book Week on Nov. 24-30, as mandated by Proclamation No. 109, signed in 1936.

This year's theme is "Family Literacy: Reading Begins with Us."

The Philippine Librarians Association Inc. (PLAI), in cooperation with The National Library (TNL), will spearhead various activities during the week-long observance, among them: an outreach program at Baseco community, Tondo, Manila on Nov. 23; fun walk and book-character parade around Rizal Park; and a formal opening ceremony with Adel A. Tamano, Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila president, as guest speaker at The National Library on Nov. 26.

A fellowship luncheon will be held at Kamay Kainan, L/1, TriNoma, North Edsa, QC, on Nov. 30. Call 6370912 loc 229 and 5250926.

Women's Wellness

Fitness First starts 'Run for a Cause'

IN ORDER TO PROMOTE A HEALTHIER lifestyle for its employees, Fitness First, the country's premier health club, with 16 clubs operating nationwide, recently held its first "Run for a Cause" marathon at the Fort Strip in Taguig City. Fitness First Philippines country manager Mark Ellis led employees and members in the first-ever marathon run.

"Run for a Cause" is a 7.5-kilometer marathon and 15-kilometer invitational run which is an integral part of an employee fitness program started two months ago by Mr Ellis called "Operation Shape Up". Believing that Fitness First employees themselves must be first to' live a healthy lifestyle, more than 1,000 employees were subjected to rigid physical fitness and endurance tests. Those who passed underwent a regular fitness program to maintain their current level of fitness. Those who failed were subjected to a supervised training program called "Operation.Boot Camp". Inspired by a military boot camp, employees undergo a strictly supervised workout routine at least 3 times a week.

MARK Ellis leading the runners.

Boot campers who joined the "Run for a Cause" marathon and were able to finish the run in the time allotted were given the incentive to graduate from boot camp and resume a regular fitness routine at Fitness First.

Apart from this, "Run for a Cause" is also an event that started the Fitness First Emergency Relief Fund. The Fund is intended to provide financial assistance to employees who may experience crisis situations such as calamities, sickness or hospitalization. As a funding scheme, for every employee who finishes the 7.5-km run, the company will donate P150 which will go straight into the Relief Fund. For the 15-kilometer Country Manager Invitational Run, Ellis gave an incentive amount of P3,000, half of which will also go into the Fitness First Emergency Relief Fund, to every employee who finishes the run ahead of him.

As additional incentive for employees who joined the run, various prizes from partners and supporters were raffled off along with prizes given out the overall and per age category top runner.

Originally intended as an event for employees, "Run for a Cause" likewise spread to its members from the different clubs who expressed their interest to join, hence resulting in the participation of more than 1,000 people.

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Persons with a history of diabetes; women who use diaphragms, birth control pills or spermicides; pregnant, menopausal, and post-menopausal women; and people who use catheters can have a greater risk of developing UTI. Sexual intercourse and the intake of alcohol and caffeine can also cause the infection.

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UTI?
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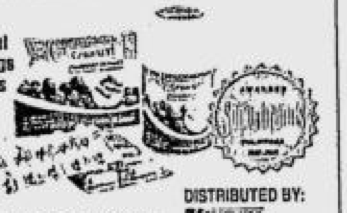

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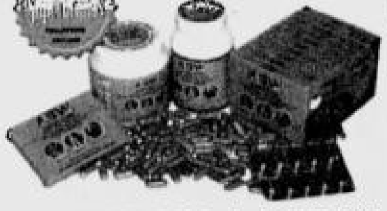

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Maningning: Luminous poetry and music

By Marjorie Evasco
Contributor

EVERY 29TH OF SEPTEMBER is marked in our calendars as a day of remembering poet-painter Maningning Miclat.

Her life and art continue to bring us today the light of poetry and painting through the young men and women, 28 years and below, who win in the annual competition organized by the Maningning Miclat Art Foundation, Inc.(MMAFI).

This year, the competition was for poetry in the three languages Maningning Miclat herself wrote: Chinese, Filipino and English.

The awards ceremony was held at Philamlife Theater on U.N. Avenue in a program that celebrated the works of the prizewinners: Chen Siyuan (for Chinese), Erica Clariz de los Reyes (for Filipino) and Raymond John de Borja (for English); as well as the songs of three of the country's best singers: Cynthia Alexander, Susan Fernandez and Girl Valencia.

Herman T. Gamboa, MMAFI president, opened the program and honored the memory of Maningning as "a brilliant and multi-awarded artist and trilingual poet and writer, teacher and translator who passed away on Sept. 29, 2000."

Each of the poets in the three language categories received a check of P28,000; a trophy sculpted by Julie Lluch called "Maningning"; and hardbound collector's editions of "Voice from the Underworld: A Book of Verses" in three languages by Maningning Miclat; "Beauty for Ashes: Remembering Maningning"; and "Beyond the Great Wall: A Family Journal" by Mario, Alma, Banaue and Maningning Miclat, which recently won a National Book Award for Biography from the Manila Critics Circle.

THE AUTHOR with Marc Anthony Cayanan, honorable mention in the English Division

Important service

Siyuan, a Chinese Literature student in a university of Guangdong Province of China, came to receive her prize from MMAFI executive director Alma Miclat, Maningning's mother, who was accompanied onstage by the judges for the Poetry in Chinese, namely James Na, Lyonel Ty and Shirley Lua.

Siyuan read her poem in Mandarin, Lua, who translated the poem into English, read her translation of "Cold Spring."

Honorable mention went to Chen Wei and Zhang Hui Chao, both from Guangdong Province.

> When the three young poetry winners stood onstage together, it was clear Maningning Miclat's gifts were bearing good fruit

De los Reyes, a BS Management student of Ateneo de Manila University, received her prize from National Artist for Literature Virgilio Almario and the judges for the Poetry in Filipino category: Benilda Santos, Luna Sicat-Cleto and Michael Coroza.

Her poem, titled "Walang Lugar ang Makata," from the collection "Bilang Babae," was read by Frances Makil-Ignacio of Dulaang UP.

Honorable mention was given to Mark Anthony Sy Angeles and Carlos Piocos III.

De Borja, a BS Electronics and Communications student of University of the Philippines, received his prize from National Artist for Literature Bienvenido Lumbera and MMAFI board director Edna Manlapaz, together with judges Marjorie Evasco, Neil Garcia and Joel Toledo.

WINNERS Raymond John De Borja (English poetry) and Erica Clariz de los Reyes (Filipino poetry)

His poem "Uncertainty Principle," from the collection "Field Effect," was read by Ricky Ibe, also of Dulaang UP.

Honorable mention went to Mark Anthony Cayanan and Joy Anne Icayan.

When the three young winners stood onstage together, it was clear Maningning's gifts were bearing good fruit and the foundation named in her honor is doing an important service to the arts, not only in the Philippines but also in Asia.

MMAFI received poetry entries not only from all over the Philippines but also from Guangdong, Shanxi, Gansu, Fujian and Chejiang Provinces of China, and from Vietnam.

Haunting songs

Singer-composer Alexander sang her own compositions and arrangements such as the haunting "Ginugunita Kita," from the poem of Maningning in "Voice from the Underworld."

NATIONAL Artists Virgilio Almario and Bien Lumbera with MMAFI executive director Alma Miclat and Chen Siyuan, Chinese poetry winner (second from right)

Fernandez rendered with fine musicality Filipino songs based on poems she remembers Maningning loved, particularly "Kung Ibig Mo Akong Makilala," a poem by Elynia Mabanglo and arranged by Upeng Galang Fernandez.

Valencia performed the memorable lullaby "Ugoy ng Duyan" by Lucio San Pedro in a medley arrangement with "Saan Ka Man Naroroon."

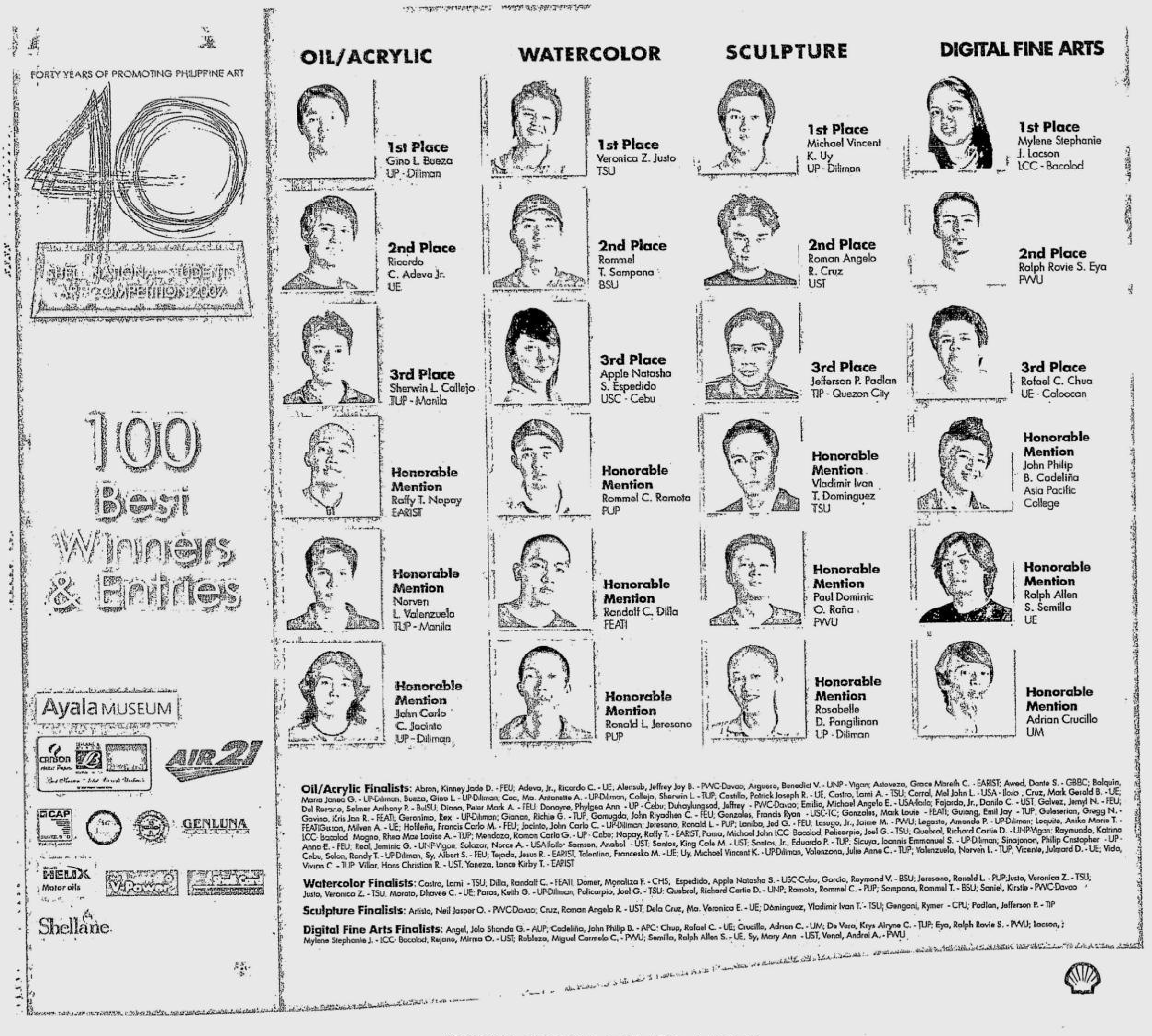
For a rousing finale, the three sang a poem by Maningning, "Berso/Dumaan Ako," set to music by Joey Ayala and arranged by Alexander.

The whole program, seamless and breathtaking, was superbly directed by Joel Saracho and her assistant, Geraldine Villamil.

Mario Miclat, Maningning's father and MMAFI board director, closed the evening's feast of poetry and music, recalling for all of us the moments that led to Maningning's death seven years ago. He read this excerpt from his essay included in the book "Fallen Cradle" (Eds. Agnes Prieto and Ricardo de Ungria, Anvil, 2006).

How does one turn pain into beauty? "Maningning: An Evening of Poetry and Music" provided for every one of us a tangible, luminous answer.

SINGER-COMPOSERS Girl Valencia, Susan Fernandez and Cynthia Alexander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3rd Place Sherwin L. Callejo TUP - Manila
Honorable Mention Raffy T. Napay EARIST
Honorable Mention Norven L. Valenzuela TUP - Manila
Honorable Mention John Carlo C. Jacinto UP - Diliman

WATERCOLOR
1st Place Veronica Z. Justo TSU
2nd Place Rommel T. Sampana BSU
3rd Place Apple Natasha S. Espedido USC - Cebu
Honorable Mention Rommel C. Ramota PUP
Honorable Mention Randolf C. Dilla FEATI
Honorable Mention Ronald L. Jeresano PUP

SCULPTURE
1st Place Michael Vincent K. Uy UP - Diliman
2nd Place Roman Angelo R. Cruz UST
3rd Place Jefferson P. Padlan TIP - Quezon City
Honorable Mention Vladimir Ivan T. Dominguez TSU
Honorable Mention Paul Dominic O. Raña PWU
Honorable Mention Rosabelle D. Pangilinan UP - Diliman

DIGITAL FINE ARTS
1st Place Mylene Stephanie J. Lacson LCC - Bacolod
2nd Place Ralph Rovie S. Eya PWU
3rd Place Rafael C. Chua UE - Caloocan
Honorable Mention John Philip B. Cadeliña Asia Pacific College
Honorable Mention Ralph Allen S. Semilla UE
Honorable Mention Adrian Crucillo UM

Oil/Acrylic Finalists: Abron, Kinney Jade D. - FEU; Adeva, Jr., Ricardo C. - UE; Alensub, Jeffrey Jay B. - PWC-Davao; Arguero, Benedict V. - UNP - Vigan; Astoveza, Grace Mareth C. - EARIST; Awed, Dante S. - GBBC; Balquin, Maria Janea G. - UP-Diliman, Bueza, Gino L. - UP-Diliman; Cac, Ma. Antonette A. - UP-Diliman, Callejo, Sherwin L. - TUP; Castillo, Patrick Joseph R. - UE, Castro, Lami A. - TSU; Corral, Mel John L. - USA - Iloilo , Cruz, Mark Gerald B. - UE; Del Rosario, Selmer Anthony P. - BulSU; Diano, Peter Mark A. - FEU; Donayre, Phylgea Ann - UP - Cebu; Duhaylungsod, Jeffrey - PWC-Davao; Emilio, Michael Angelo E. - USA-Iloilo; Fajardo, Jr., Danilo C. - UST; Galvez, Jemyl N. - FEU; Gavino, Kris Jan R. - FEATI; Geronimo, Rex - UP-Diliman; Gianan, Richie G. - TUP, Gamugda, John Riyadhen C. - FEU; Gonzales, Francis Ryan - USC-TC; Gonzales, Mark Louie - FEATI; Guiang, Emil Jay - TUP; Guleserian, Gregg N. - FEATIGuzon, Milven A. - UE; Holileña, Francis Carlo M. - FEU; Jacinto, John Carlo C. - UP-Diliman; Jeresano, Ronald L. - PUP; Laniba, Jed G. - FEU; Lasugo, Jr., Jaime M. - PWU; Legasto, Amanda P. - UP-Diliman; Loquite, Anika Marie T. - LCC- Bacolod; Magno, Rhea Mae Louise A. - TUP; Mendoza, Roman Carlo G. - UP - Cebu; Napay, Raffy T. - EARIST; Pama, Michael John LCC- Bacolod, Policarpio, Joel G. - TSU; Quebral, Richard Cartie D. - UNP-Vigan; Raymundo, Katrina Anna E. - FEU; Real, Jeminic G. - UNP-Vigan; Salazar, Norce A. - USA-Iloilo; Samson, Anabel - UST; Santos, King Cole M. - UST; Santos, Jr., Eduardo P. - TUP; Sicuya, Ioannis Emmanuel S. - UP-Diliman; Sinajonon, Philip Cristopher - UP-Cebu, Solon, Randy T. - UP-Diliman, Sy, Albert S. - FEU; Tejada, Jesus R. - EARIST, Tolentino, Francesko M. - UE; Uy, Michael Vincent K. - UP-Diliman, Valenzona, Julie Anne C. - TUP; Valenzuela, Norven L. - TUP; Vicente, Julmard D. - UE; Vida, Vivian C. - TUP; Villar, Hans Christian R. - UST, Yoneza, Lance Kirby T. - EARIST

Watercolor Finalists: Castro, Lami - TSU; Dilla, Randolf C. - FEATI; Domer, Monaliza F. - CHS; Espedido, Apple Natasha S. - USC-Cebu, Garcia, Raymond V. - BSU; Jeresano, Ronald L. - PUP;Justo, Veronica Z. - TSU; Justo, Veronica Z. - TSU; Marato, Dhavee C. - UE; Paras, Keith G. - UP-Diliman, Policarpio, Joel G. - TSU; Quebral, Richard Cartie D. - UNP; Ramota, Rommel C. - PUP; Sampana, Rommel T. - BSU; Saniel, Kirstie - PWC-Davao

Sculpture Finalists: Artisto, Neil Jasper O. - PWC-Davao; Cruz, Roman Angelo R. - UST; Dela Cruz, Ma. Veronica E. - UE; Dominguez, Vladimir Ivan T. - TSU; Gengoni, Rymer - CPU; Padlan, Jefferson P. - TIP

Digital Fine Arts Finalists: Angel, Jolo Shonda G. - AUP; Cadeliña, John Philip B. - APC; Chua, Rafael C. - UE; Crucillo, Adnan C. - UM; De Vera, Krys Alryne C. - TUP; Eya, Ralph Rovie S. - PWU; Lacson, ; Mylene Stephanie J. - LCC- Bacolod, Rejano, Mirma O. - UST; Robleza, Miguel Carmelo C. - PWU; Semilla, Ralph Allen S. - UE, Sy, Mary Ann - UST, Venal, Andrei A. - PWU

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Akon, heart and soul

By Pocholo Concepcion

AKON BROKE INTO the scene only in 2004, and yet the Senegalese-American singer-songwriter has become so hot that he landed a spot at the all-star "Live Earth" concerts early this year.

But what's more amazing is that he's performing on Nov. 29 at the Araneta Coliseum. Either the local concert promoter is a good negotiator, or Akon himself is such a cool dude that he agreed to come to Manila at this point of his career.

It's difficult not to like his music, although the way he stares on the cover of his second album "Konvicted" (MCA) can be intimidating. (He doesn't hide the fact that he spent five years in jail for armed robbery and drug dealing). But whatever negative notion that springs from this thug image dissipates as the songs start playing.

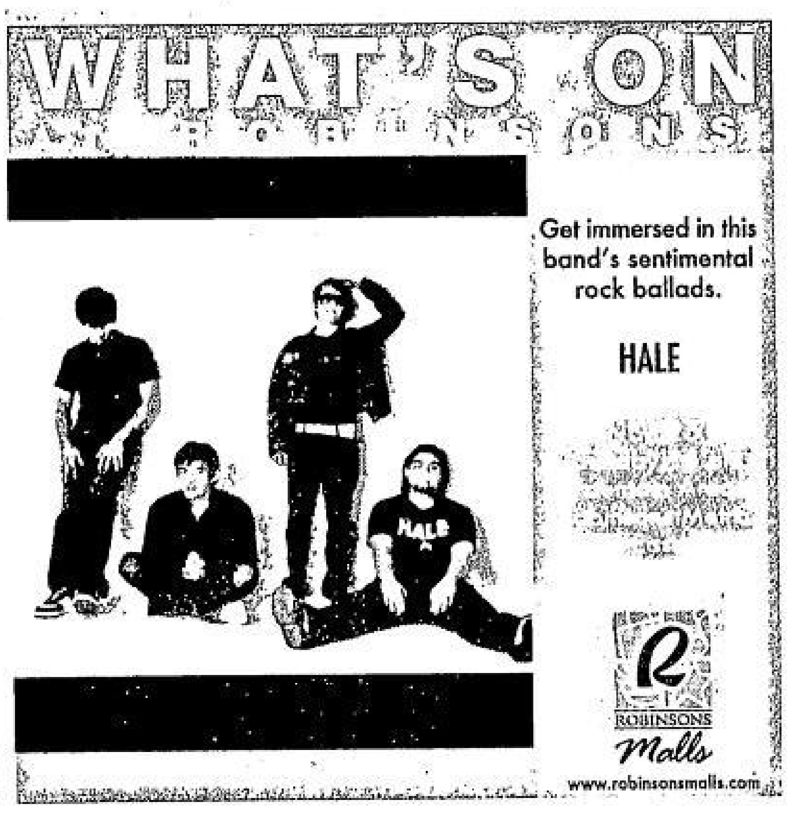
Akon must really have high credentials in the industry. How else can one explain the presence of rap royalty like Eminem and Snoop Dogg on two tracks in "Konvicted"?

The thing is that Akon can't be described outright as a hip hop artist. But definitely he's got soul and his songs lean heavily on R&B. And there's one cut, "Mama Africa," which grooves on a reggae beat.

The biggest factor that makes Akon such a big worldwide hit (more than 5 million copies of "Konvicted" sold) is his wonderful ear for melody that wafts through his smooth, engaging voice. "Silky" is how some writers have described those vocals, which somehow soften some of the rough subjects in the album.

It's hard to comprehend what he's saying in some tracks (no lyric sheet provided), but apparently the first three tracks, "Shakedown," "Blown Away" and "Smack That" are direct experiences Akon had as a fearless 15-year-old engaged in criminal activities. The tense situation

AKON / G2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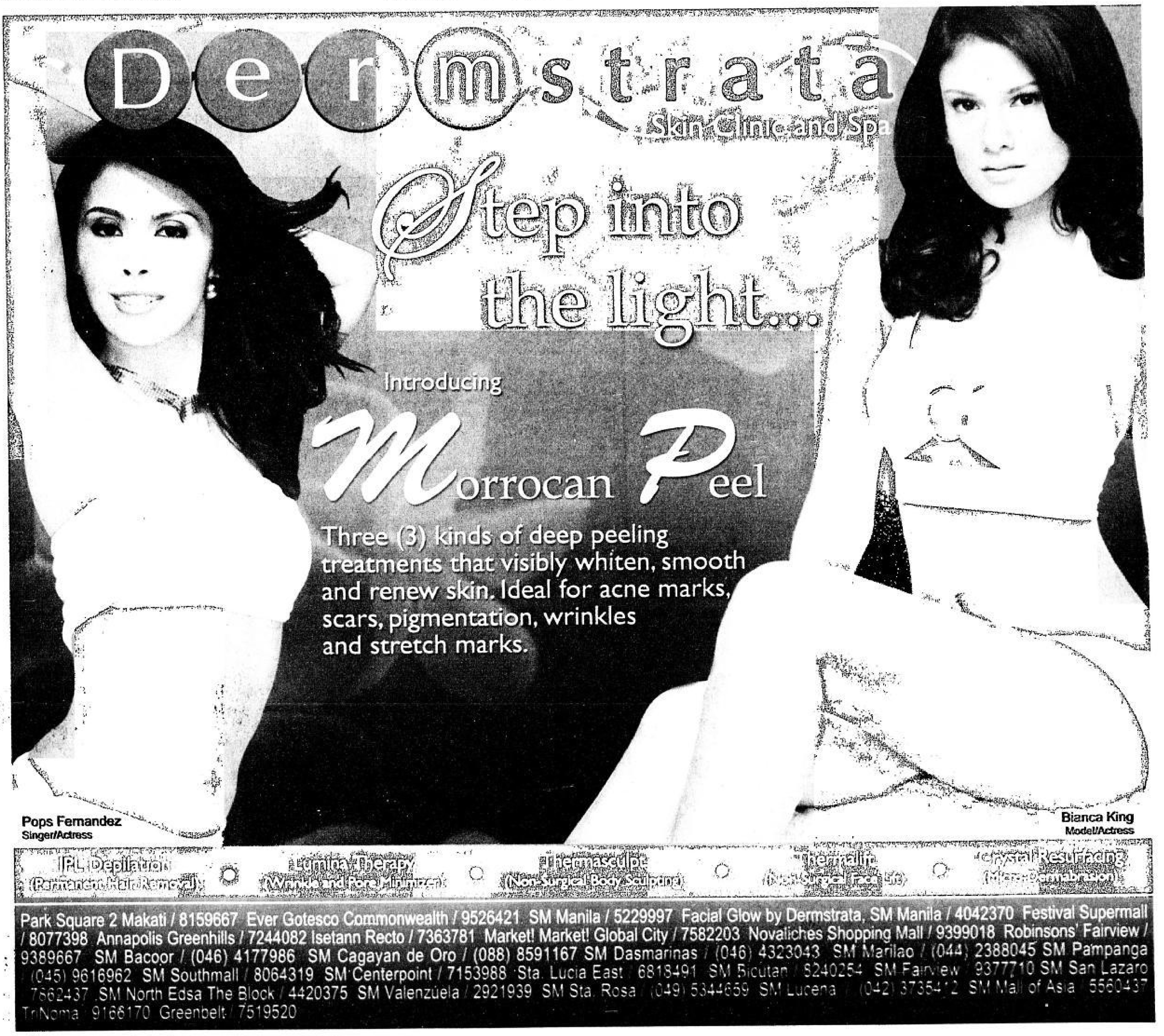
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3 FRED CLAUSE Sneak Preview
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

4 THE KINGDOM Sneak Preview
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

5 ONE MORE CHANCE
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

6 BOOGEYMAN 2
12:40 3:00 5:20

7 SUPERBAD
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

8 indieSine: PAIN THINGS
1:00 2:30 4:00 5:30 7:00 8:30

9 GAME PLAN
1:00 3:10 5:20 7:30 9:40

10 THE NANNY DIARIES
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

ERMITA

1 30 DAYS of NIGHT
12:35 3:00 5:35 8:00 10:00

2 BOOGEYMAN 2
11:10 1:25 3:40 5:55 8:05 10:00

3 LIONS FOR LAMBS
12:50 2:40 4:30 6:20 8:10 10:00

4 LUST CAUTION
12:30 3:40 6:50 10:00

5 ONE MORE CHANCE
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

6 GAME PLAN
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7 THE NANNY DIARIES
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Midtown

1 SUPERBAD
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

2 ONE MORE CHANCE
11:25 1:55 4:25 6:55 9:25

3 BEOWULF
11:20 2:00 4:40 7:20 10:00

METRO EAST

1 GAME PLAN
4:05 3:40 6:20 9:00

2 ONE MORE CHANCE
11:00 1:30 4:00 6:30 9:00

3 30 DAYS of NIGHT
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4 BOOGEYMAN 2
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5 SUPERBAD
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6 LIONS FOR LAMBS
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7 BEOWULF
10:50 1:20 3:55 6:30 9:05

8 THE NANNY DIARIES
12:05 2:15 4:25 6:40 9:00

NOVALICHES

1 ONE MORE CHANCE
2 BEOWULF
3 THE NANNY DIARIES
4 SUPERBAD

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2 ONE MORE CHANCE
3 SUPERBAD
4 BEOWULF

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3 SUPERBAD
4 30 DAYS of NIGHT

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2 APAT DAPAT DAPAT APAT
3 RENDITION

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3 (DOLBY) BEOWULF
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3 (DTS) RESERVED
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4 WEDDING DAZE
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2 HIGHLANDER
3 KUNG FU FIGHTER
4 ONE MORE CHANCE

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Akon, heart . . .

From page G1

portrayed in "Shakedown," for instance, recalls the times he would get caught by the police. And "Smack That," featuring Eminem doing some fluid rapping, is about the perks of the gangsta life, such as women falling all over him because he's got a nice car and loads of cash.

Cliché as these may seem, it's the melody and Akon's great singing voice that account for these songs' popularity.

Even the love tunes are shocking in their explicit language. What appears on the song title as "I Wanna Love You" is actually "I Wanna F_k You"—in which Akon figures in a seduction scene with a stripper in some club, and with Snoop Dogg guesting on rap vocals. What's funny is that it doesn't sound a bit repulsive because Akon's singing is, uh, romantic.

It's not all harsh and graphic, though. "The Rain" and "Never Took the Time" border on the sentimental, with Akon describing depression with the weather and regret over lost love, respectively. "Mama Africa" is a tribute to the black race's homeland, made more pleasant with a surprising reggae arrangement.

But if there's one sole reason for Akon's mass acceptance among our local youth, it has to be the song "Don't Matter" which ends this 12-track CD.

We remember DJ Mo Twister promoting it heavily during his early morning radio program several months ago, and hearing it every day helped bring across the message that Akon really knows how to craft hooks for a great pop song.

The lyrics are quite simple and, again, full of clichés ("Nobody wanna see us together/But it don't matter, no/Cause I got you … "). Yet they don't appear as drawbacks, since he has this terribly charming way of singing.

Akon looks rough and scary, but he's got charm that makes dangerous sound like fun.

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1 SUPERBAD
1:05, 3:35, 6:05, 8:35, 11:05
R-18

2 BEOWULF
12:40, 3:10, 5:50, 8:30, 11:05
PG-13

3 ONE MORE CHANCE
12:40, 3:10, 5:50, 8:30, 11:10
PG-13

4 THE NANNY DIARIES
3:45, 6:10
G

FRED CLAUS
8:35, 11:05
G

POWER PLANT
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FRED CLAUS G 12:50,3:10,5:30, 7:20,10:10	ONE MORE CHANCE PG13 12:10,2:40,5:10, 7:40,10:20	NANNY DIARIES G 12:50,3:10
THE KINGDOM R13 1:10,3:30,5:50, 8:10,10:30	SUPER BAD R18 12:50,3:10,5:30,7:50	BEOWULF PG13 12:10,2:45,5:20, 7:55,10:30

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① BEOWULF
MTRCB. PG-13
2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00

② ONE MORE CHANCE
MTRCB. PG-13
2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00

③ THE NANNY DIARIES
MTRCB. GP
12:20, 2:45, 5:10
FRED CLAUS
MTRCB. GP 7:30, 10:00

④ THE KINGDOM
MTRCB. PG-13
2:15, 4:40, 7:05, 9:30

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CINEMA 2
BOOGEYMAN 2
// THE KINGDOM
11:00 , 1:15 , 3:35
// 5:50 , 8:10 , 10:30
R-13

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SUPERBAD //
FRED CLAUSE
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// 7:20 , 10:00
R-18 // GP

CINEMA 4
ONE MORE
CHANCE
11:30 , 2:15 , 5:00
7:45 , 10:30 PG-13

CINEMA 5
BEOWULF
10:45 , 1:40 , 4:30
7:20 , 10:10
PG-13

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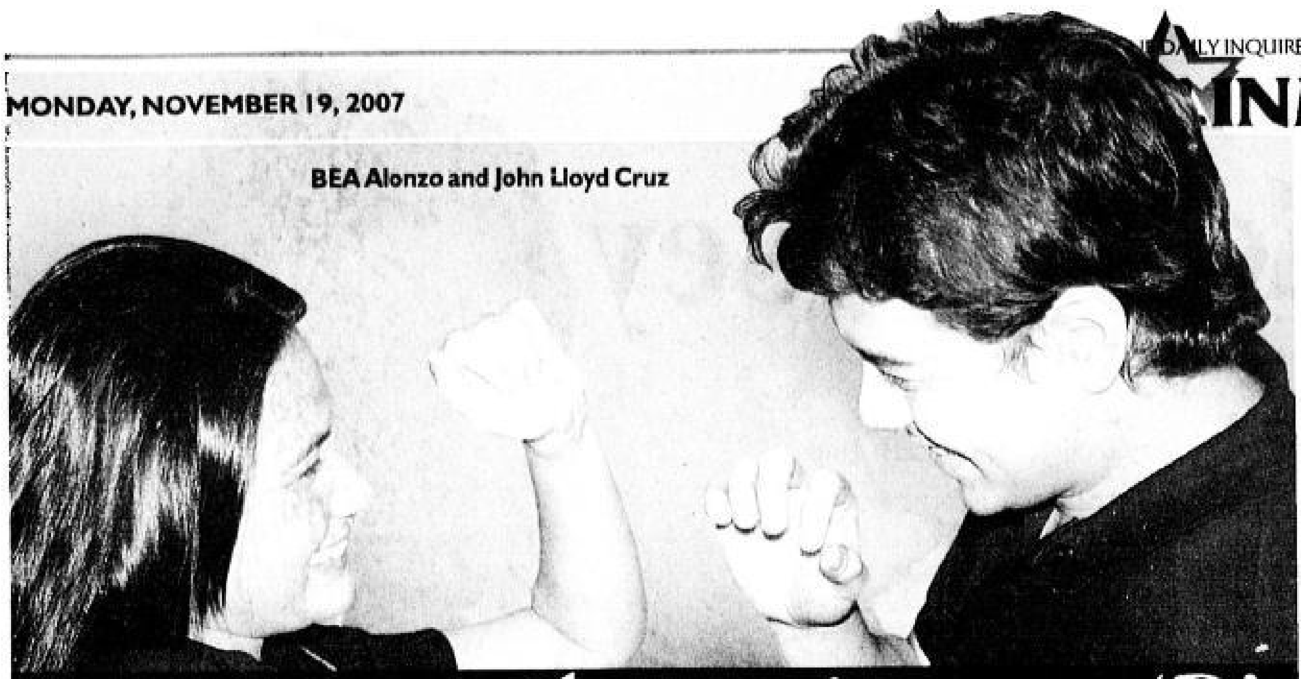

BEA Alonzo and John Lloyd Cruz

'One More Chance' gets a 'B'

By Marinel R. Cruz

CATHY GARCIA MOLINA'S "One More Chance" has received a "B" rating from the Cinema Evaluation Board (CEB) for the "very good and sensitive" performance rendered by its lead actors, John Lloyd Cruz and Bea Alonzo.

"They have graduated from their bubblegummy roles and can really be considered serious actors now," a CEB member said of the actors during the deliberations last week..

An "A" grade entitles a movie to a 100-percent tax rebate while a "B" enjoys a 65-percent discount.

"Cruz and Alonzo displayed joy and pain so beautifully in their miens and actions," another CEB member said. "The two are more natural in tackling mature roles than when they do *pa*-cute characters."

In the movie, Popoy (Cruz) and Basha (Alonzo) are inseparable since they met and fell in love as students in a university.

But what seems to be a perfect relationship turns sour and leads to a very painful breakup.

The Board also commended the performance of newcomer Maja Salvador, who despite her limited scenes in the movie is "most sensitive and effective."

"She breezes out her role as effortlessly and as naturally as possible. Happiness and suffering are clearly seen on her face, in her action, in her words," a CEB member said.

The Board members were also impressed with director Molina's work, noting that she "took pains and succeeded in restraining the film from becoming too mushy and cutesy."

"Of course," says another critic, "the intelligently crafted screenplay by Vanessa Valdez and Carmi Raymundo helped in making 'One More Chance' a beautiful film."

CEB chair Christine Dayrit said the movie would have gotten an "A" had its editing been "tighter" and its cinematography, more "focused."

But the production design is "beautiful and attractive;" the scoring and sound are "just right—nothing garish or obstructive, nothing intruding," the Board noted.

The movie also casts Derek Ramsay, Dimples Romana, Bea Saw, Janus del Prado and James Blanco.

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	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
GLORIETTA 1	THE KINGDOM	BEOWULF	FRED CLAUS	ONE MORE CHANCE			
GLORIETTA 4	FRED CLAUS	THE KINGDOM	THX BEOWULF GUARANTEED SEATS	SUPER BAD	THE GAME PLAN	ONE MORE CHANCE	THE NANNY DIARIES
GREENBELT 1	ONE MORE CHANCE	BEOWULF					
GREENBELT 3	THX THE KINGDOM GUARANTEED SEATS	THX BEOWULF GUARANTEED SEATS	FRED CLAUS GUARANTEED SEATS	SUPER BAD GUARANTEED SEATS	THE NANNY DIARIES GUARANTEED SEATS		
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	THX BEOWULF	THE NANNY DIARIES	THE KINGDOM	SUPER BAD	FRED CLAUS		
AYALA CENTER CEBU	BEOWULF	SUPER BAD	ONE MORE CHANCE	BALLS OF FURY			
MARKET! MARKET!	ONE MORE CHANCE	FRED CLAUS	SUPER BAD	BEOWULF	THE KINGDOM		
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glorietta	Sounds of Christmas: Christmas Chorale feat. Phil. Jesuit Community November 24; 6pm; Glorietta 4 Park
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ALABANG TOWN CENTER	Seussical The Musical November 23 to 25; 11am, 3pm & 6pm; Activity Center
AYALA CENTER CEBU	Metrobank Car Event November 24 to 25; Activity Center, Paseos and Rotunda Area
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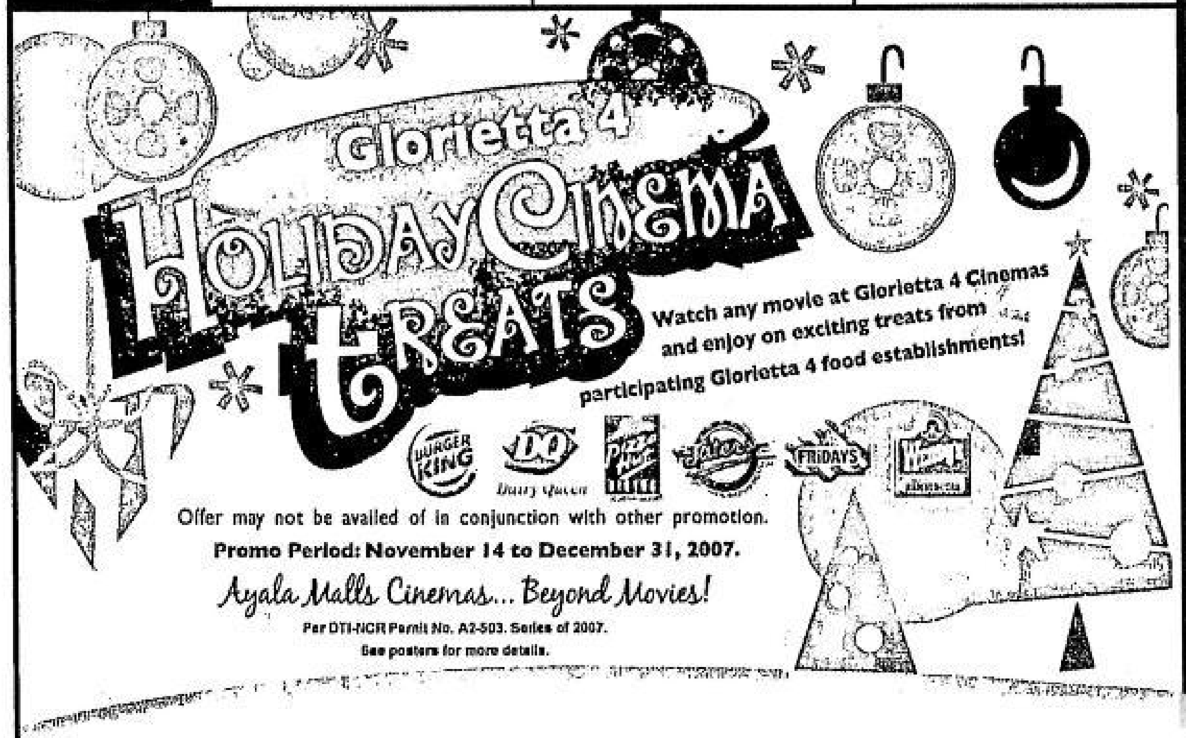

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Enchanting Patrick Dempsey

By Janet Susan R. Nepales
Contributor

LOS ANGELES—Everything they said about Patrick "McDreamy" Dempsey's style and reputation are true.

Sharply dressed in an all-black Paul Smith outfit, Dempsey walked into a roomful of journalists with his sexy unshaven look, killer smile and dreamy eyes.

To make matters worse, or should we say "sinful" especially to all the married and committed reporters, Dempsey turned out to be a true charmer and wonderful storyteller.

This writer was the lucky recipient of a nudge here and a touch there when he demonstrated to us how he and "Enchanted" co-star Amy Adams (Princess Giselle) had to learn a ballroom dance in the Disney fairytale cum modern-day New York City love story.

"It was simply magical," Dempsey described the Kevin Lima-directed romantic comedy where he portrays the handsome, no-nonsense divorce lawyer, Robert Phillip.

Of the Robert Phillip toy doll, Dempsey exclaimed, "I still cannot believe I have a doll!"

This actor with Irish heritage, a Golden Globe nominee for his popular neurosurgeon role of Dr. Derek Shepherd in the drama "Grey's Anatomy," found doing the Disney movie a refreshing break from his "McDreamy" TV role.

Nonviolent role

"I thought it was a great opportunity to do something different," he said. "I like the fact that it was nonviolent because we already have too much violence in this world. I also like the idea of the guy taking care of his daughter by himself, without a wife."

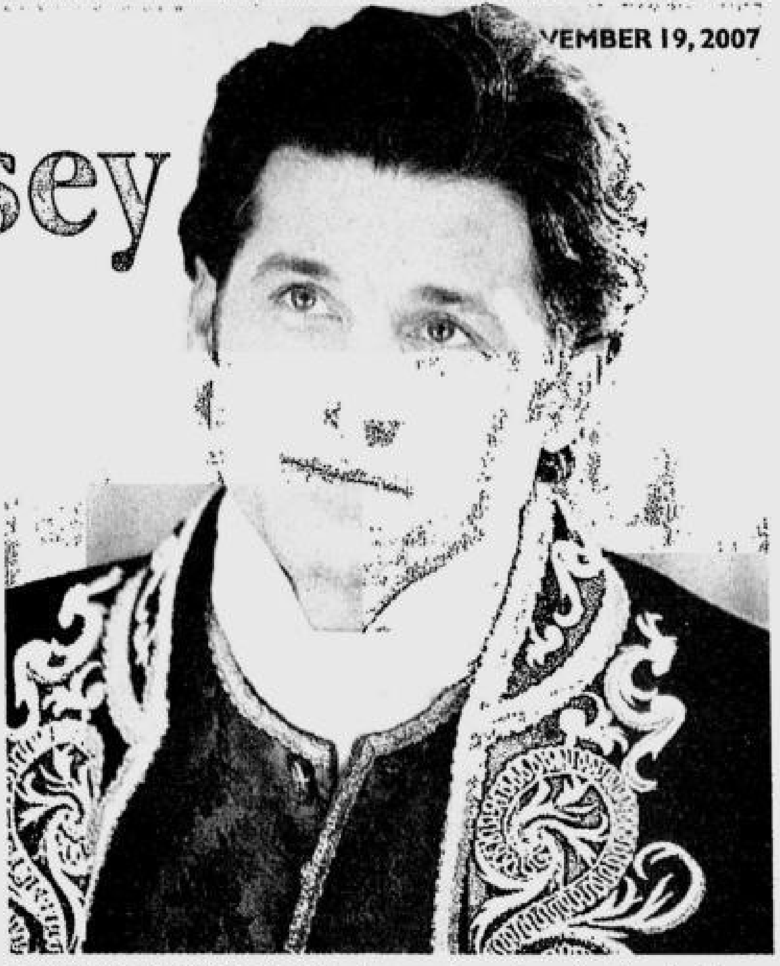
The movie, which also casts James Marsden (Prince Edward), Susan Sarandon (Queen Narissa), Timothy Spall (Nathaniel) and Idina Menzel (Nancy Tremaine), is the story of a princess from Andalasia who accidentally lands in the middle of New York City's Times Square on her wedding day.

"The witty combination of animation, real life adventure, musical comedy, and love story makes 'Enchanted' one of those fun, magical movies I would love to take my kids to see," Dempsey disclosed.

He is married to noted make-up artist and founder of Delux Beauty, Jillian Fink. They have three children—five-year-old daughter Tallulah Fyfe and nine-month-old twin boys Darby Galen and Sullivan Patrick.

Second sexiest

Coming in second to another family man, Matt Damon, in this year's People Magazine "Sexiest Man Alive" poll, Dempsey is also as human as any other charming man. He explained how he stepped on Amy Adams' foot and ripped her toenails off while shooting "Enchanted."



PRINCE CHARMING. Patrick plays a princess' man in story book romance given a modern twist.

He narrated: "When we were doing the dance scene, Amy, who was a ballerina, would not allow me to lead her. Then one time, she took off her shoes because they were giving her blisters. She danced barefoot with me and I accidentally stepped on her foot and ripped off her toenails. She was wounded! So Kevin (Lima) told her that she should let me lead her and I should start leading in order to get what we wanted. We did exactly that and Amy started to look at me, too, while we danced and from then on, everything went smoothly."

WITH Amy Adams, who plays Princess Giselle, in "Enchanted"

Their chemistry is so good, viewers would think they have been working with each other for a long time. It was actually their first time to be paired in a movie.

"Amy is very talented, absolutely brilliant and smart. It is fascinating to watch her turn from fairytale princess to real life Manhattan girl," the 41-year-old Dempsey said.

As for working with the legendary Susan Sarandon, Dempsey admitted, "I was amazed how easy it was to work with Susan. She was down-to-earth and was just one of the guys. One time, she brought a tequila bottle to the set and asked us to have tequila shots since 'it's Friday!' I love her because she is not at all self-conscious. It is really interesting to note that the more successful people are, the more normal they are."

Private tutor

Dempsey, who also appeared in "The Emperor's Club" and "Freedom Writers," enjoyed dancing in the movie. "I took some lessons in ballroom dancing at the Arthur Murray Dance Studio. Gene Kelly once tutored me privately." He said with a smile, "I am just glad though that I wasn't asked to sing in the movie."

With a wink, he added, "I am supposed to be one of the 'real' guys and normally, real people don't just break into a song."

No, I thought, real guys just become green with envy with McDreamy.

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Finance
Securities and Exchange Commission
SEC Bldg. EDSA, Greenhills, Mandaluyong City

CORPORATION FINANCE DEPARTMENT

IN THE MATTER OF:

VIVA COMMUNICATIONS, INC.
Registrant

REGISTRATION OF SECURITIES

x---x

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that on November 8, 2007, a sworn statement was filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on behalf of Viva Communications, Inc. for the registration of 408,952,148 common shares of stock with par value of PhP1.00 each which shall be sold or offered for sale as follows:

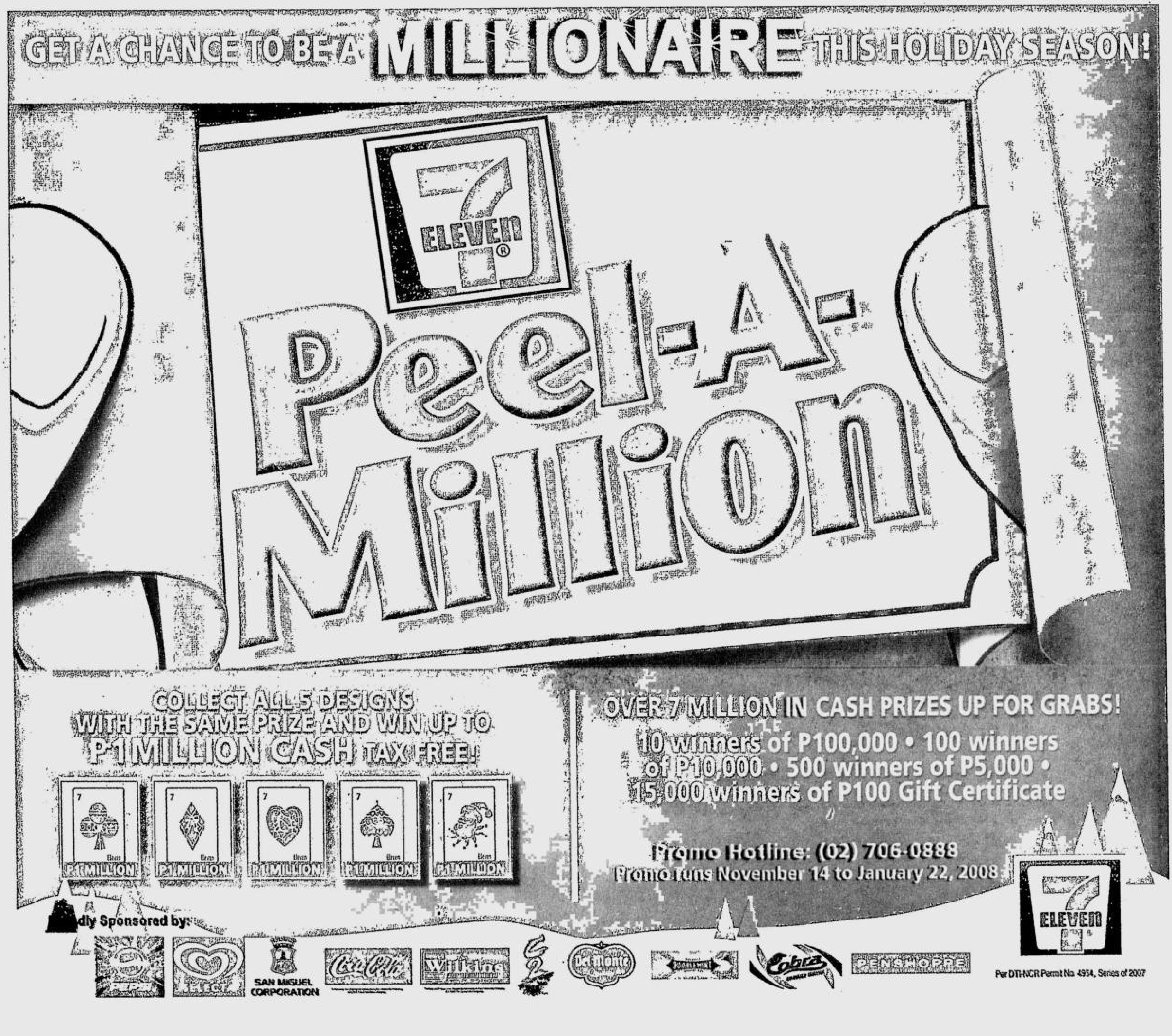
		Offer Price
Primary Offer	92,857,143 Common shares	P 9.72 to P12.93
Secondary Offer	49,999,500 Common shares	P 9.72 to P12.93
Issued and Outstanding	266,095,505 Common shares	P 1.00

According to the papers presented, the following persons are the officers/directors of the corporation:

Vicente R. del Rosario Jr.	Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer
Teresita R. Cruz	Director, President and Chief Operations Officer
Teofilo R. del Rosario	Director
Vincent G. del Rosario	Director, Executive Vice President/Treasurer
Veronique R. Corpus	Director, Senior Vice President
Eduardo A. Yotoko	Independent Director
Ray A. Dempsey	Independent Director
Marcia Gina L. Lopez	Corporate Secretary and Legal Counsel
Elsie Torrejon Rufino	Executive Officer for Films and Broadcast
Marie Ann G. Gomez	Group Comptroller
Maria Theresa C. Santiago	Comptroller

The registration statement and other papers/documents attached thereto are open to inspection by interested parties during business hours at the Securities and Exchange Commission, EDSA, Quezon City, and copies thereof will be furnished to interested parties upon request at such reasonable fees as the Commission may prescribe.

JUSTINA F. CALLANGAN
Director



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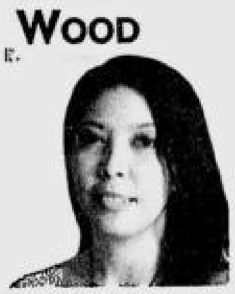
Erring celebrities owe the public an apology

DOLLY WOOD



Dolly Anne Carvajal

ASKING FOR A PUBLIC APOLOGY SEEMS to be the "in" thing in show biz these days. **Piolo Pascual** and **Sam Milby** want one from **Lolit Solis** for her alleged libelous article about them. **Cristine Reyes** demands the same from **Carlene Aguilar** after the beauty queen confronted her regarding **Dennis Trillo.**

PJ, Sam and Cristine have every right to do so. But isn't an act of contrition more sincere when it's said behind closed doors? Perhaps what erring show biz folk ought to make is an apology to the public for thinking they can get away with anything just because of who they are. How long can the public endure show biz excesses being rammed down their TV screens?

Waiting for a promise

CARLENE Aguilar

CRISTINE Reyes

AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Cristine Reyes is still licking her own wounds. She has filed a case against Carlene Aguilar for oral defamation and slander. Although Dennis has apologized to her already for the trouble Carlene has caused her, Cristine is still waiting for his promise to clear her name in public.

"I hope he makes a statement soon to defend me. I don't wanna talk to him now. *Masama pa ang loob ko sa mga nangyari,"* she laments.

It's not true that she's planning to quit show biz due to the scandal. Isn't there a chance for her and Dennis to pick up from where they left off?

"Only time will tell," she sighs. "But I'd be lying if I say I don't miss our closeness. One thing I miss about Dennis is the way he always knows how to cheer me up by giving me a big hug and kissing me on the forehead."

Hmm ... kiss and make up? Or kiss goodbye?

Slander of unjust vexation

Speaking of Cristine's lawsuit, I wonder if Carlene's nasty text messages and her whispered bitchy remark to Cristine is considered slanderous since it wasn't heard/read by the public and it just transpired between both of them. Isn't it technically more of an unjust vexation?

I'm no lawyer but having been embroiled in several controversies myself, I'm quite familiar with some nuances of the law. Oh well ... if a lawyer is creative enough, then he can make the improbable probable.

How true?

A reader from Austin, Texas (Irene Rose) e-mailed me, asking to check out track seven of **Jim Brickman**'s latest CD "Hope" (http://profile.imeem.com/ESFcCb8/music/JXd9udy6/hope/), because it sounds very much like **Nelson del Castillo**'s early '90s hit "If." I listened to it and I agree with Irene's observation. She wonders if Nelson is aware

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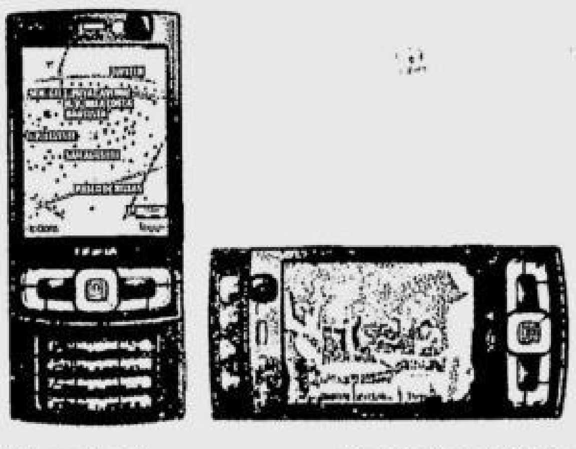

It's what have become.

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PBB ALUMNA Chix Alcala and JR Gotengco do the chacha.

MALOU Crisologo vamps it up with Jeffrey Derilo.

HOST Dominic Ochoa, right, chats with Jojit Cabuenas and Joy Viado.

Grace under pressure

ABC 5 dance show marks second year against all odds

By Bayani San Diego Jr.
Photos by August de la Cruz

HOST LUCY TORRES SAYS reporting for work in faraway Novaliches for the ABC 5 celebrity contest "Shall We Dance" (SWD), which marks its second year this month, is like coming home.

She describes the show's cast and crew as a "small, closely knit team." For the past two years, they have become tight like a family.

Co-host Arnell Ignacio agrees: "It's difficult to put up a show if the staffers and the stars don't know each other. If there's a problem, we easily solve it because we're a team. We all enjoy doing the show."

According to co-host Dominic Ochoa, he doesn't consider work on the set as burdensome. "Even though the ABC 5 studio is two hours away from my home in the suburbs, I still look forward to our tapings."

For international dance sport champion and judge Ednah Ledesma, everyone—from the hosts to director Rich Ilustre—works hard to make the show "glamorous and fast-paced."

Judge Regine Tolentino says they all want what's best for the show, acknowledging that each member of the SWD team is willing to go the extra mile for the program.

Tolentino is a good example. Apart from her duties as juror, she has also been acting as couturier for the celebrity contestants and for Torres for their dance numbers since day one.

"Every taping day is like a 'Project Runway' race for me," says Tolentino of the hectic pace of making the costumes, comparing it to a US reality show/fashion competition. "It really pushes me to the limit. Sometimes the stars can only do fittings the night before. Sometimes I don't even know their measurements so I have to guess and whip up something from scratch."

It's about grace under pressure, Tolentino adds.

At the time of the INQUIRER visit, Tolentino had to rush backstage and sew up the dress of celeb contestant Chix Alcala.

Tolentino says her goal is to highlight the contestants' assets, so they can feel like a different person while dancing.

A big challenge was dressing up the show's heavyweight contestants Malou Crisologo, Marissa Sanchez and Dinky Doo Jr. Crisologo eventually emerged as champ.

"This program allows me to show off my skills and develop my creativity," Tolentino says.

The contestants are similarly put to the test.

"They're all hard-working and raring to unveil their hidden talent," Tolentino adds.

Ledesma says they want to show "the other side of celebrities."

Ongoing is the dance showdown among pop singers Sitti and Nina and comedienne Tuesday Vargas.

Judge Audie Gemora recalls that initially, some celebrities took rehearsals for granted. "But later they realized that they had to take it seriously. Otherwise, they'd end up looking foolish."

Ledesma observes that the stars' commitment have yielded positive results.

"They put in a lot of work and their transformations are always amazing," she says. Some not only lose weight, they also acquire discipline. Some rehearse beyond the usual three to four hours per week. They have newfound appreciation and respect for dance."

Gemora commends plus-size contestants Crisologo and Sanchez. "Even if they were disadvantaged because of their weight, they still showed viewers that they could be graceful. Malou vamped it up. Marissa did splits. They surprised me."

HOSTS Arnell Ignacio and Lucy Torres rehearse their spiels between takes.

PBB TEEN idol Mikee Lee dances up a storm with partner Raine Trinidad.

REGINE Tolentino and her assistant fuss over Chix Alcala's skirt in the dressing room.

LUCY Torres takes a coffee break on the set.

JUDGES Ednah Ledesma, Audie Gemora and Regine Tolentino give the show and the celeb contestants high scores.

REALITY stars, from left, Uma Khouny with Victoria Huyatid, Mikee Lee with Raine Trinidad, and Chix Alcala with JR Gotencgo, in a dance showdown.

Erring celebrities . . .

From page H1

of this since his name isn't in the album's credits. But would a renowned songwriter like Brickman dare take credit for a composition that's not his own?

Soiree Beaujolais

Join the revelry at Le Club French Chamber of Commerce's 13th celebration of Soirée Beaujolais Festival at Sofitel Philippine Plaza on Nov. 20 at 5:30 p.m. This year's theme is "Loire Valley Castles," which will take guests into the vineyards where Beaujolais Nouveau is sourced. The show's hosts are **Johnny Litton** and **Tessa Prieto-Valdez**, with guests The Bloomfields and The Hotlegs. A whopping P1 million worth of raffle prizes are at stake. For tickets, call 8139005. *Faisons la fete*!

Staple location

For any romantic scene, Miladay Jewels has become a staple location for Filipino filmmakers. The cast of "One More Chance" had fun shooting at the jewelry store's Trinoma branch. SVP for Marketing Christine Dayrit, who's also chairperson of the Cinema Evaluation Board, says that many show biz couples like **Susan Roces** and the late **FPJ** got their wedding bands from her family's store.

'Sikil'

Temperatures will rise to the max in the provocative film "Sikil" (New Life Cinema), which will have its Philippine premiere on Nov. 22 at the UP Film Center (5 and 7 p.m.). It is top-billed by **Roni Bertubin, Ken Escudero, Will Sandejas** and **Ashely Silverio**. The uncut version is the lone Philippine entry to International film fests in Valencia, Cancun and Palm Spring. *Sikil* means to restrain. Catch it and see how long you can contain your hidden desires. What you resist will persist!

E-mail wateringholeshangrila@yahoo.com.

Splashy Vegas show

CHICAGO—Celine Dion said the nearly five years she spent performing in her Las Vegas concert extravaganza were exciting, demanding and never boring.

The splashy show, which opened in March 2003 at Caesars Palace, will close Dec. 15.

"You know the crowd and the people there is different every night, to start with," Dion said on an episode of "The Oprah Winfrey Show" broadcast last week.

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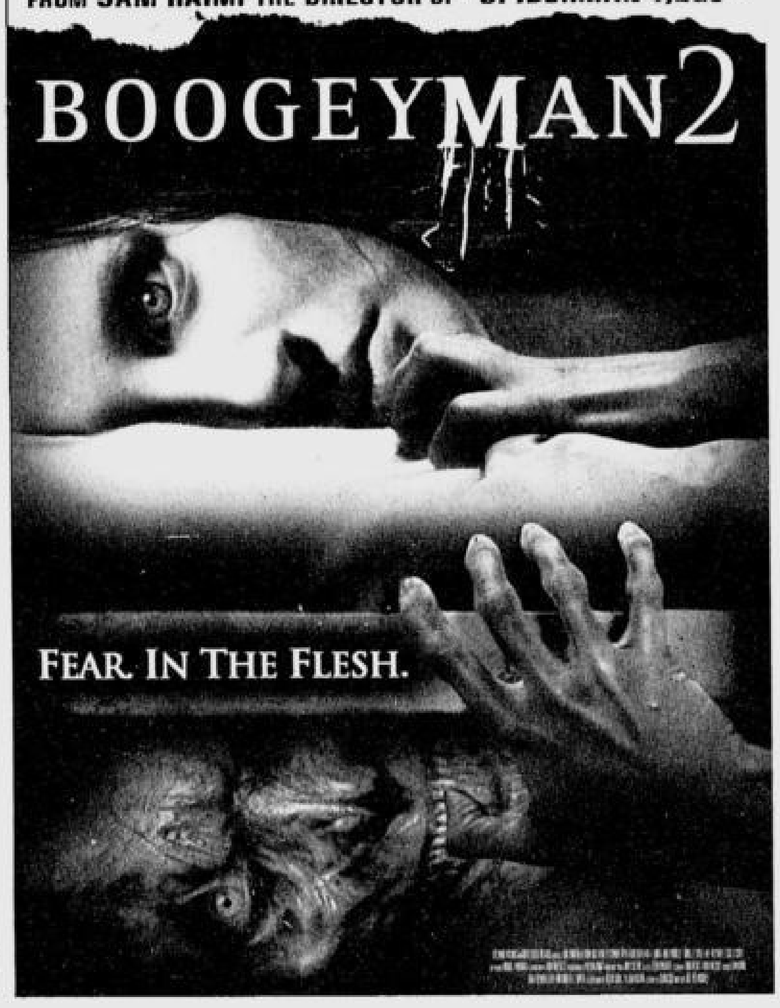

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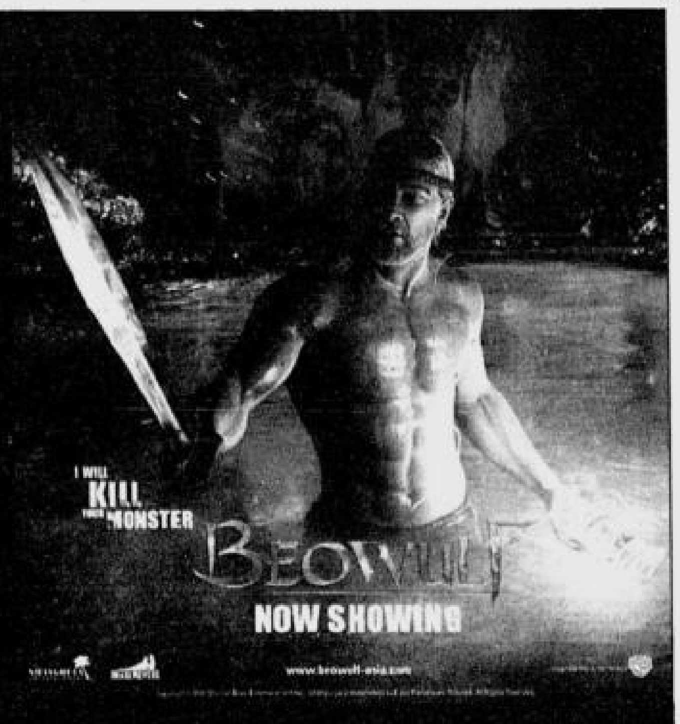

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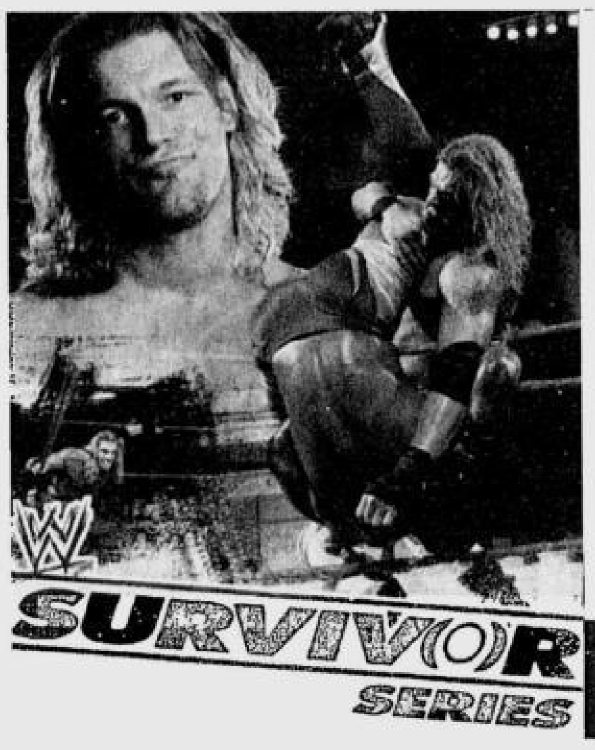

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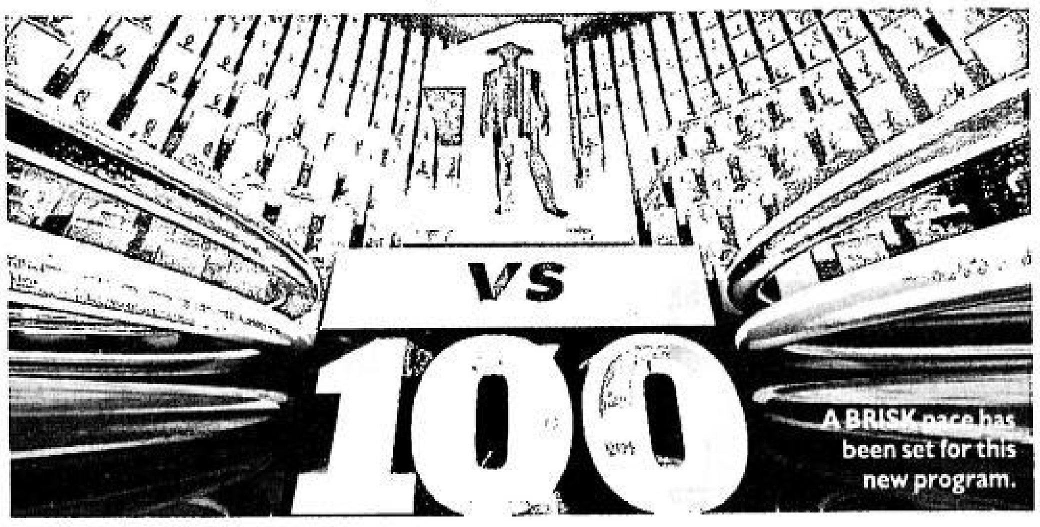


A BRISK pace has been set for this new program.

Battle of quiz and game shows

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

THE PRIME TIME *TELESERYES* AND *FANtaseryes* may still be dominating local TV programming, but new quiz and game shows have also been coming on strong of late. Are they poised to threaten the hold of established game shows like "Game Ka Na Ba?" and "Deal or No Deal" on viewers?

The best of the new lot appears to be "One Versus 100," with quizmaster **Edu Manzano** proficiently setting a brisk pace for the new program that pits one contestant against an opposing panel of 100.

Every time a panelist comes up with a wrong answer, the contestant wins money—in escalating amounts.

The competition between contestant and panel is friendly, but it certainly isn't staid, as the surviving panelists goad the contestant *not* to cash in his winnings—because, if *he* makes an incorrect response, they will get the money he's earned.

Deciding factor

Some telecasts of the show are rollicking fun, while others are quite dull. The deciding factor in this regard appears to be the choice of contestant. If he or she is engaging and intelligent, the program perks up. On the other hand, if the contestant is self-centered, excessively *porma* or overly cautious, the show sours up.

So, the production's staffers have their work cut out for them to choose the best possible contestant from week to week.

Successful format

For his part, **Janno Gibbs** is hosting "Kakasa Ka Ba Sa Grade Five?"—a quiz show patterned after a hit US program that pits adults against a panel of grade school students. The format is successful because viewers are delighted when the kids turn out to be better informed than their sometimes clueless elders.

But Janno's handling of the program could use more zap and savvy. In addition, some of the program's contestants are too clueless for the purpose of the show.

On the plus side, the program reminds adult viewers of facts or lessons they've forgotten, and gets young viewers more interested in learning, so they can be as knowledgeable as the show's kid panelists.

Fast-paced show

Finally, "Whammy" is a fast-paced show that enables celebrity contestants to win a lot of money—and to lose it all instantly if a "monster" icon appears quite by chance. To add insult to injury, the "whammied" celebrity is "slimed" by yucky substances that drip down on his or her noggin.

The program's "all or nothing" format gives it a unique edge. Contestants are continually reminded that jackpots can become sooty, empty pots in an instant, and empathetic viewers learn this sobering lesson as well.

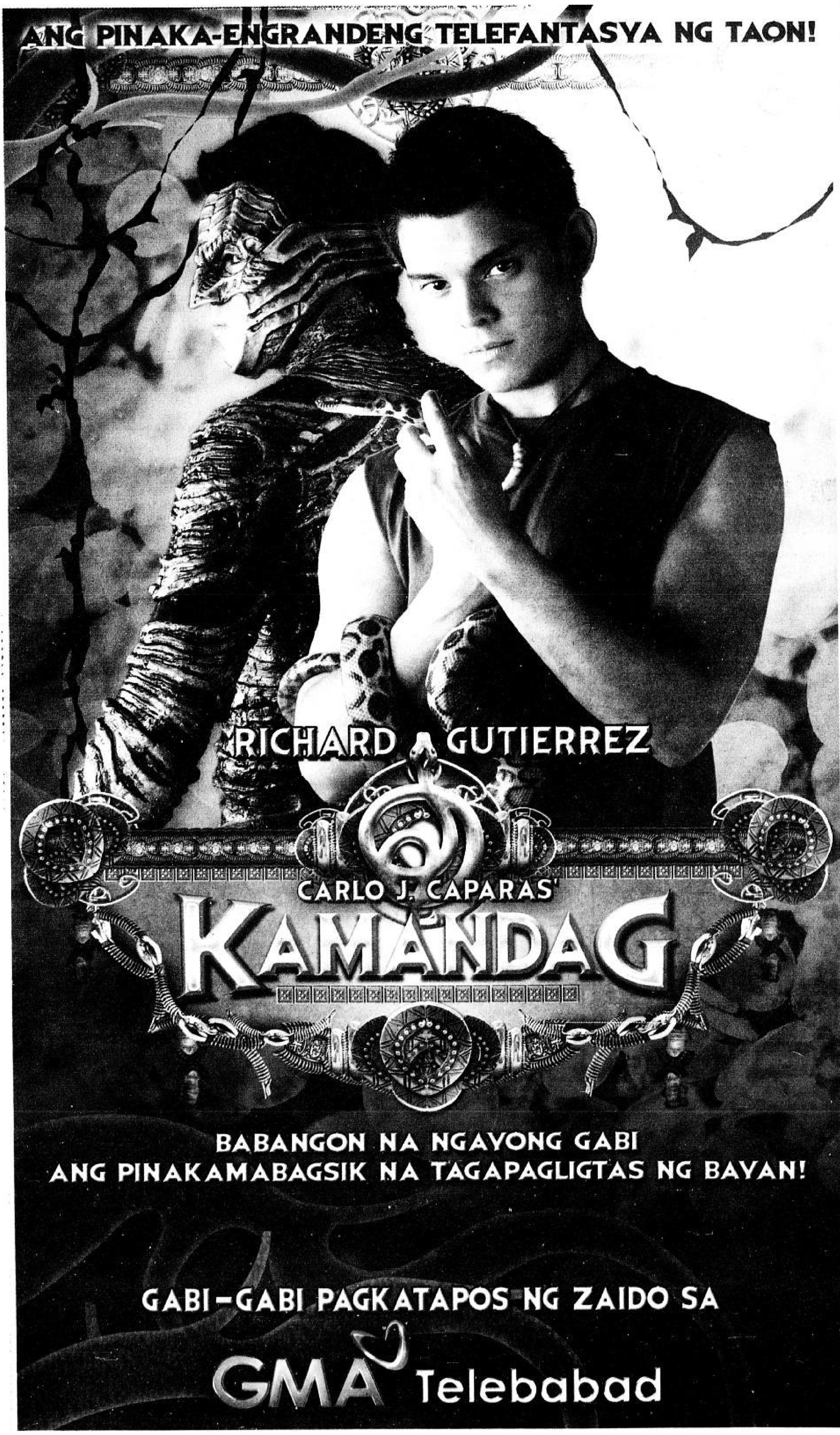
As for the "sliming," most contestants accept it as yet another punishment to endure, but they strive mightily to not allow it to rain on their parade.

'The Namesake'

After watching Indian director **Mira Nair**'s "Monsoon Wedding," we became her fan. Her astute handling of the complex conventions and permutations of a traditional Indian wedding told us that she possessed a rare cinematic sensibility that should be encouraged to further develop and mature, so she can reward us with new stories and insights in the coming years.

Happily, Nair has lost little time following up on her early successes. Her new film, "The Namesake," is about the arranged marriage between Ashoke (**Irrfan Khan**) and Ashiwa (**Tabu**), who jet off from hot and humid Calcutta to start a new life together in New York.

The two virtual strangers have a son, and the film focuses on him when he becomes a teenager (he's played by **Kal Penn**). In his quest to find his own identity, he has a tough time making sense of his Bengali roots and his American birthright. All the while, however, his parents cling to their Bengali traditions—and the film's plot and theme thicken.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2007 Coty all revved up

(The following speech was delivered by 2007 Coty President Ira V. Panganiban during the awards night at the Rockwell Tent Nov. 15)

CAGI President Ira Panganiban delivers the President's Report

CHANGE, ONE OF the few things that remain constant in this world. And change is a part of every organization that seeks to improve on itself and try to be better at what it aims to achieve.

This year, the Car Awards Group Inc or CAGI Board decided there must be changes in how we do things, for our aspirations to be more relevant to those we choose to serve. And as our motto this year suggests, we are "All Revved Up" for these changes.

We have moved our program closer to the end of the contending year, to give it more relevance and benefit to the automobile manufacturers and their winning products.

We have re-categorized the awards in order to truly reflect the present market conditions and the vehicles we presently see in the showrooms.

We have redesigned our testing system to be more responsive to the performance of the vehicles we evaluate.

We have done all this in consultation and coordination with Confederation of Automobile Manufacturers of the Philippines or Campi and other auto manufacturers.

Of course, in the end, we at Cagi still bear the responsibility of our decisions and decide we did to move onwards.

We would like to extend our gratitude to Petron Corp for being our title sponsor and relieving us of budgetary worries.

Of course there are also the important partners too that gave us as much help to make us achieve our ambitious projects.

This year, we conducted the testing at the sprawling estate of the San Lazaro Leisure Park in Carmona, Cavite.

We have also accredited Cagi with the National Press Club (NPC) and no less than President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo inducted our officers in Malacanan Palace.

We have begun other projects like the Annual Motoring Factbook of the

COTY/2

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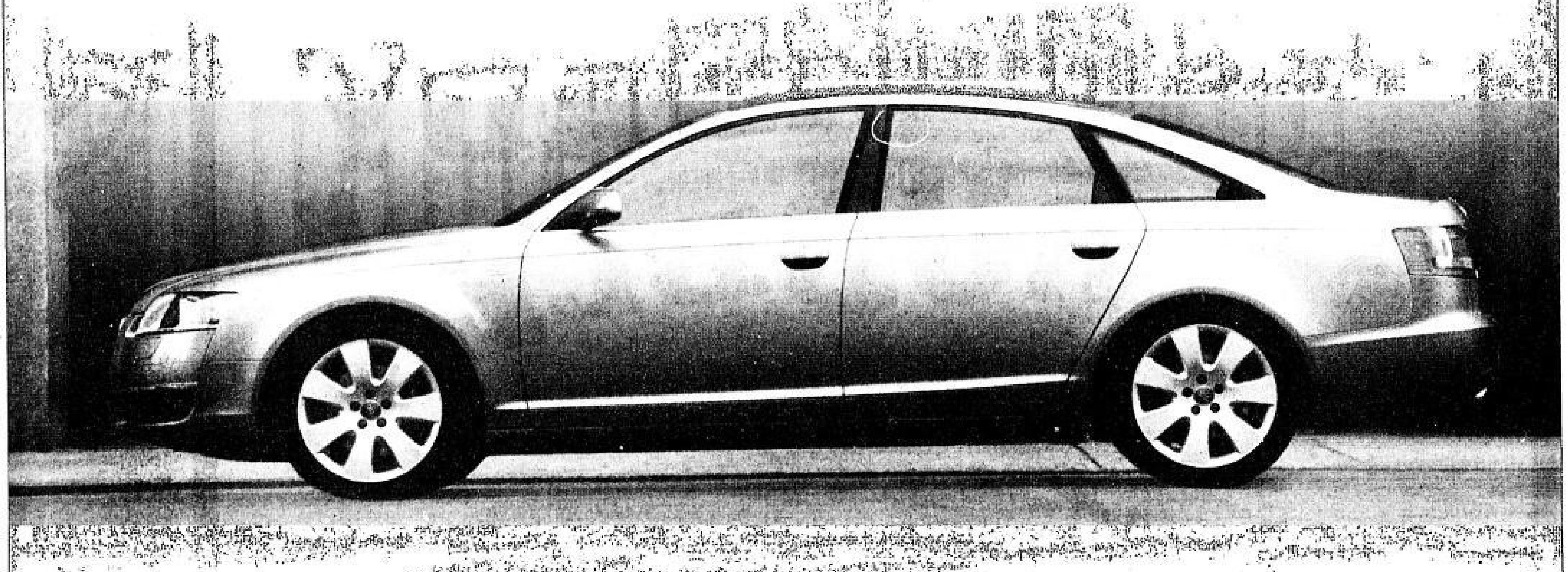

*Awarded by the Auto Motor und Sport, Germany's no. 1 automotive magazine, for 2007.
**Given by the Car Awards Group, Inc. (CAGI), composed of Philippines' motoring journalists, in the prestigious Car of the Year Awards (COTY) - 2007.

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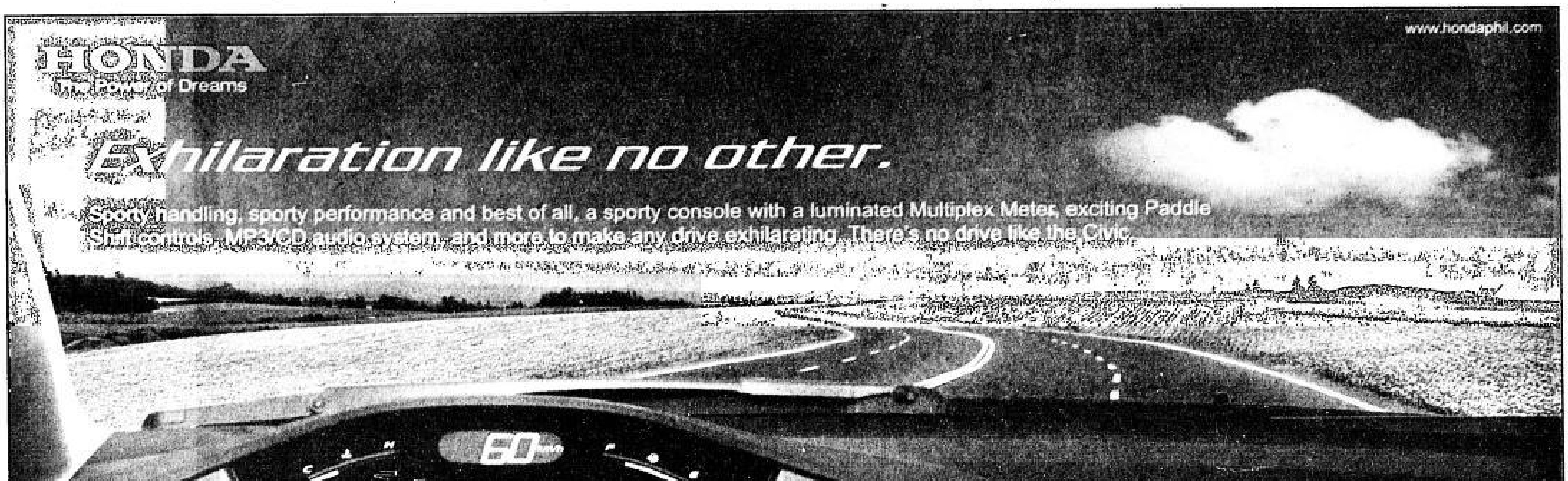

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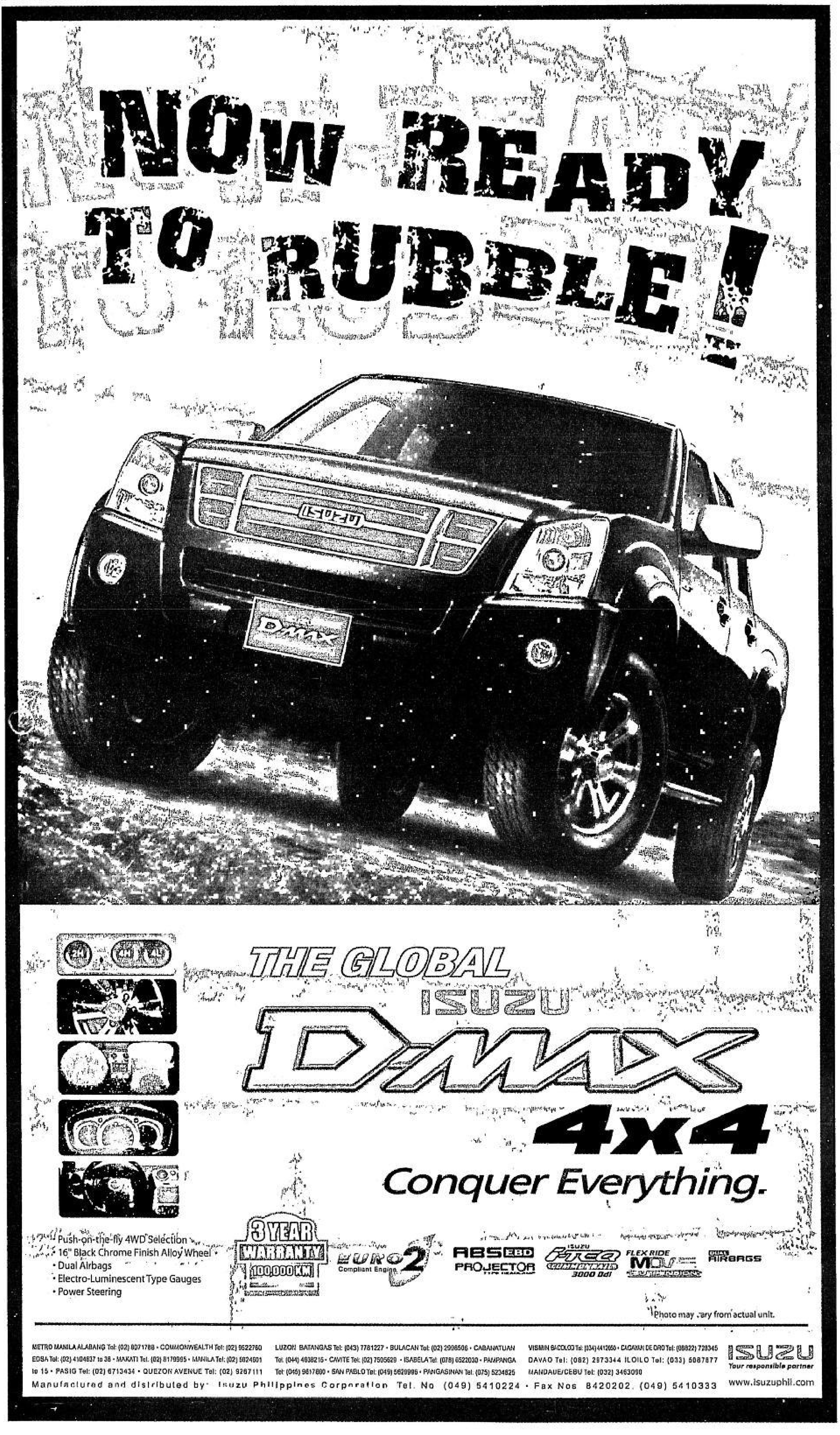
HONDA

CAGI founding president Armin Amio, Ford Group Philippines VP for sales and marketing Vinay Piparsania, Cagi member Alvin Uy. Piparsania accepts the Coty Award for the Ford Everest 4x2 as the Executive SUV of the Year.

CAGI founding president Armin Amio, Mitsubishi Motors Philippines Froilan Dytianquin, Cagi member Alvin Uy. Dytianquin accepts the Coty Award for the Mitsubishi Endeavor as the Luxury SUV of the Year.

Iya Diza of Rockwell Land Corp, Chut Velasquez of Kia Motors, Cagi secretary Robby Consunji. Velasquez accepts the Coty Award for the Kia Carens CRDi as the Compact Van / Multipurpose Vehicle of the Year.

CAGI President Ira Panganiban, Viking Cars AVP Lyn Buena, Viking Cars president Albert Arcilla. Arcilla and Buena accept the Coty Award for the Volvo C30 as the Petron 2007 Car of the Year.



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CAR of the YEAR

2007 Coty all revved up

From page 1

Philippines and other projects that we believe will contribute to the safety of our cars and motorists.

As I understand, the car industry in the Philippines has begun a dramatic upswing and all indications show it will be so for quite some time.

We at Cagi would like to thank all manufacturers, not only for their support of the Petron 2007 Car of the Year Awards-Philippines in cooperation with the automobile Association Philippines, but also for their role in the growth of the Philippine automobile industry and consequently the Philippine economy.

We assure you, our friends, of our help when you need them, anytime, anywhere.

I would like to personally thank my board and officers Ferman Lao - vice president for internal affairs, Andy Sevilla - vice president for external affairs, Atty Robby Consunji - corporate secretary, Jeff Reyes-treasurer and Dino Directo - public relations officer, for putting up with me and my brand of management.

New plans are afoot for next year. It may come as a surprise, but it will definitely be fun.

So, allow me to wish the nominees good luck and the winners congratulations.

> 'We at Cagi would like to thank all manufacturers, not only for their support of the Petron 2007 Car of the Year Awards-Philippines in cooperation with the automobile Association Philippines, but also for their role in the growth of the Philippine automobile industry and consequently the Philippine economy'

CAGI Secretary Robby Consunji, Iya Diza of Rockwell Land Corp, Ford Group Philippines AVP Tonnette Lee, Ford Group Philippines president Vinay Piparsania. The latter accepts the Coty Award for the Ford Ranger 4x4 as the 4WD Pickup of the Year.

Manila International Auto Show President Joseph Ang, Lito German of BMW Philippines, Cagi treasurer Jeff Reyes. German accepts the Coty Award for the BMW X5 as the Ultra Luxury Crossover / Wagon of the Year.

CAGI Board of Advisers member Aida Sevilla Mendoza, Cristine Reyes of Honda Cars Philippines, Automobile Association Philippines director Mandy Eduque. Reyes accepts the Coty Award for the Honda Civic 1.8 AT as the Compact Car of the Year.

CAGI external VP Andy Sevilla, Hyundai Asia Resources Inc EVP Ma. Fe Agudo, Cagi treasurer Jeff Reyes. Agudo accepts the Coty Award for the Hyundai Starex as the Luxury Van/ Multipurpose Vehicle of the Year.

CAGI Board of Advisers member Aida Sevilla, Viking Cars AVP Lyn Buena, Automobile Association Philippines Director Mandy Eduque. Buena accepts the Coty Award for the Volvo S60 T5 as the Executive Car of the Year.

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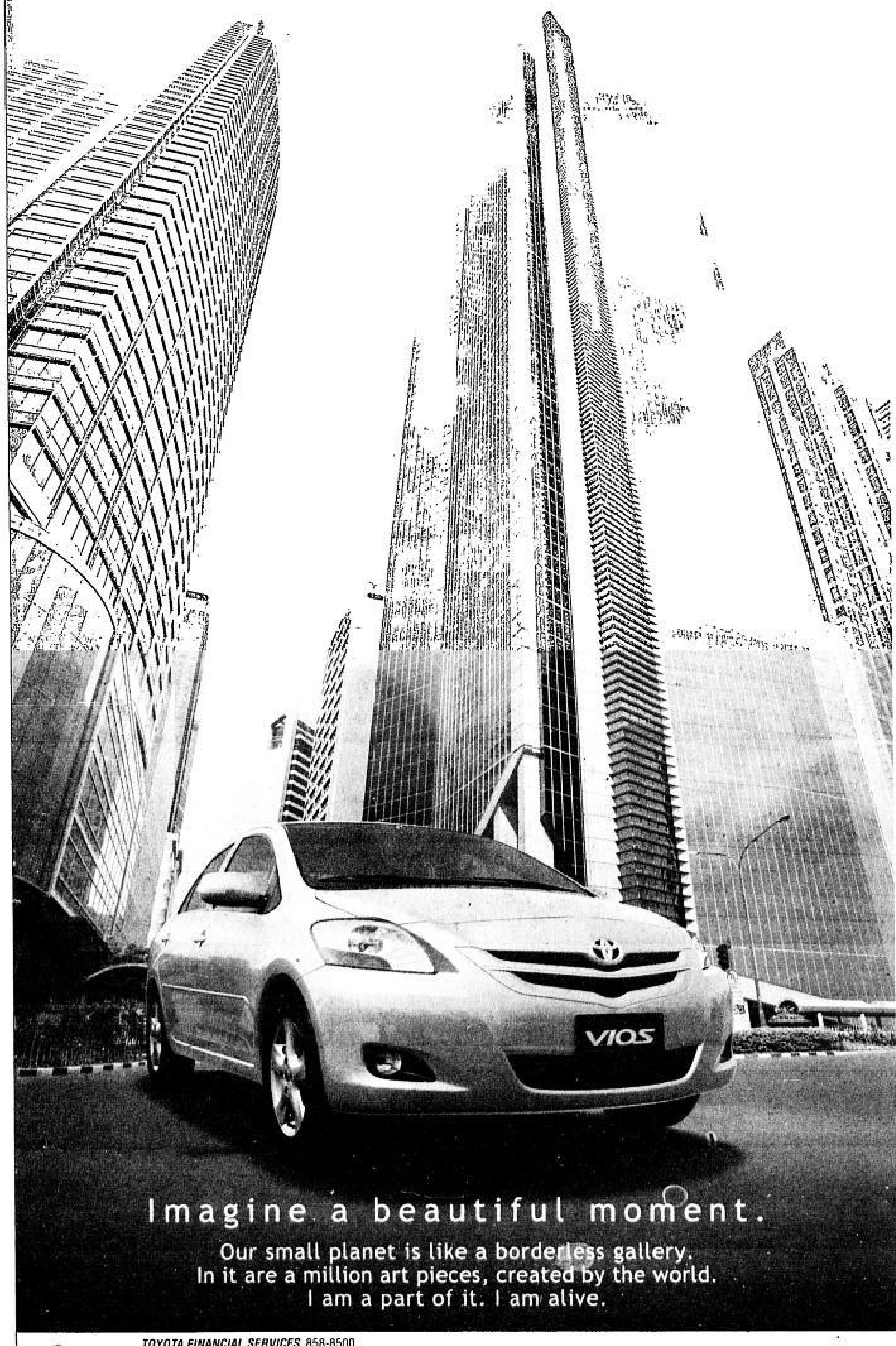

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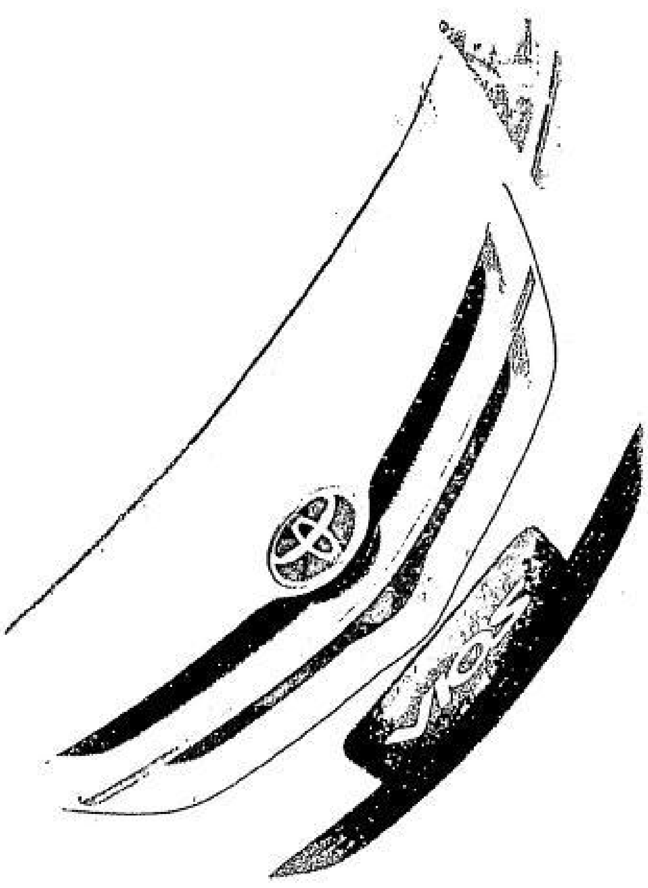

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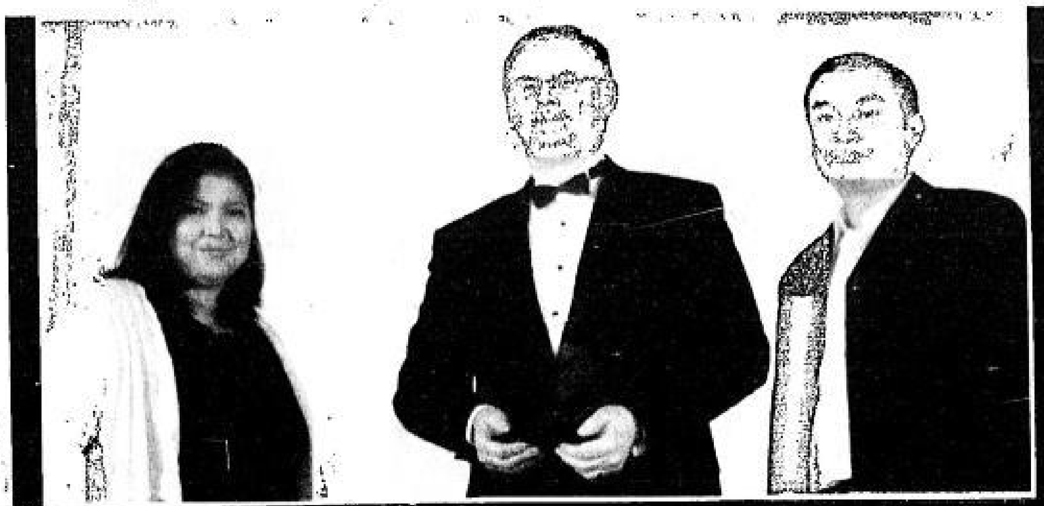
CAGI external VP Andy Sevilla, Elijah Sue Marcial of Toyota Motor Philippines, Cagi treasurer Jeff Reyes. Marcial accepts the Coty Award for the Toyota Camry as the Midsize Car of the Year.



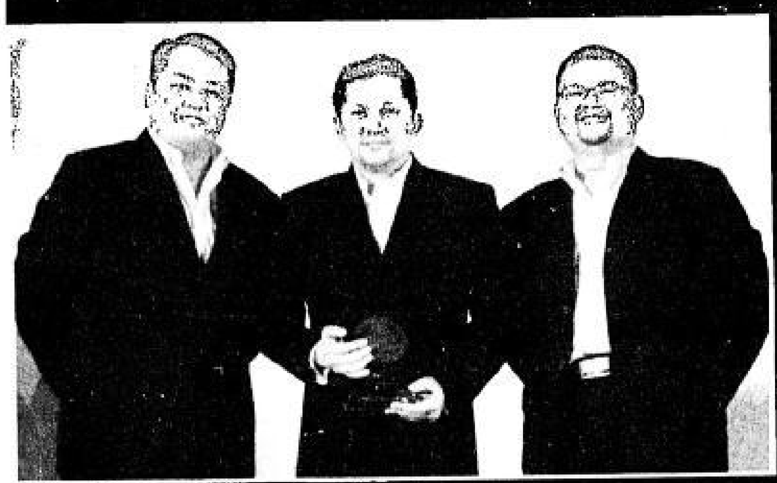
CAGI Founding President Armin Amio, General Motors Philippines president Francis Burdett, Cagi member Alvin Uy. Burdett accepts the Coty Award for the Chevrolet Suburban as the Ultra Luxury SUV of the Year.

CAR of the YEAR

SAMMY Liuson of Concept One, Lyn Buena of Volvo and lawyer Robby Consunji of Cagi

Sammy and Robby also hand out an award to marketing and public relations firm Ogilvy

ISUZU Philippines Corp's Ronald Baladad's turn with Sammy and Robby. IPC bagged the special awards Concept One Best Media Launch (Global D-Max) and Best for Business Vehicle (Crosswind Sportivo).

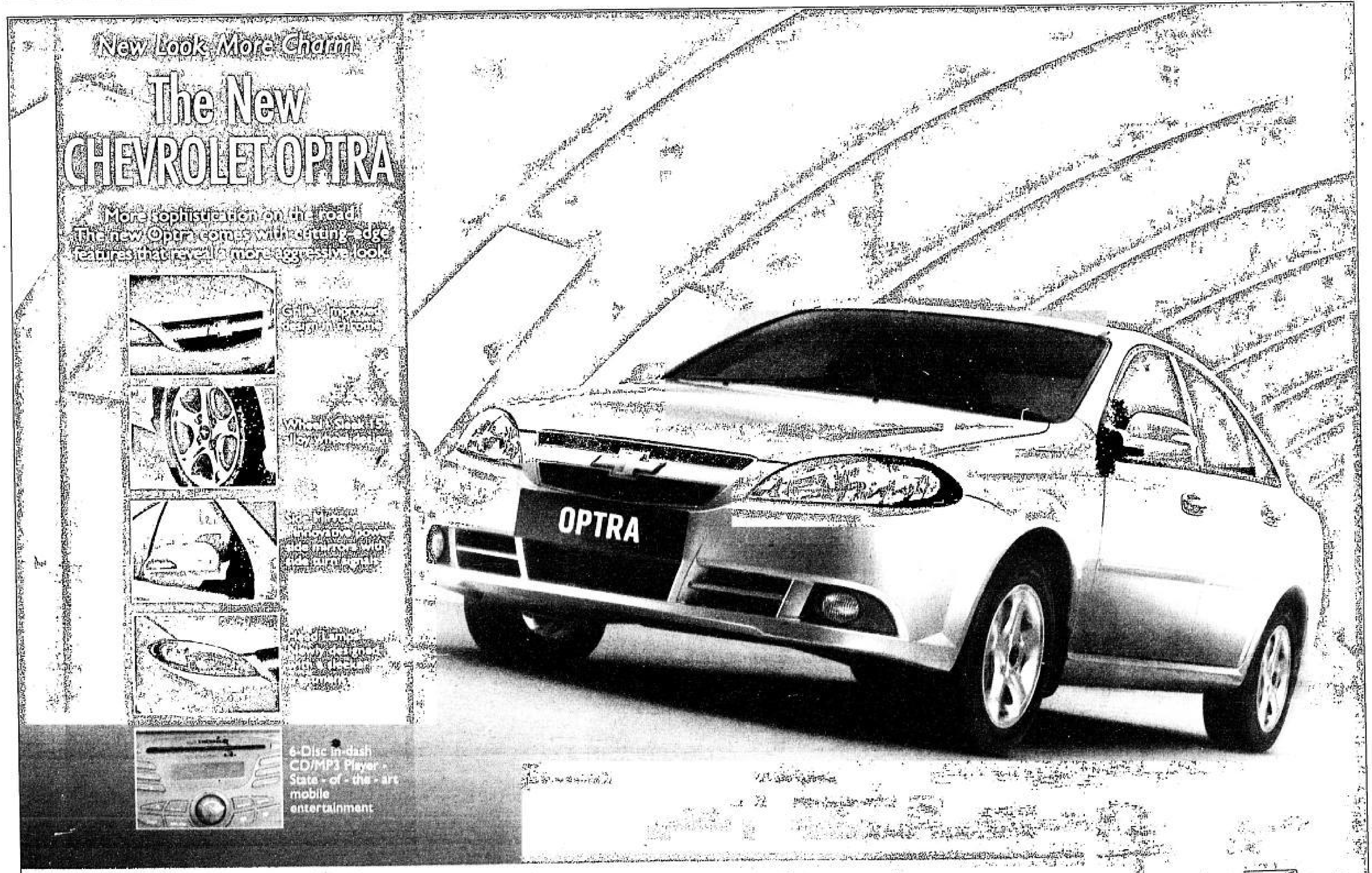


Kaycee Crisostomo of Bosch, Albert Arcilla, president of Volvo, and Botchi Santos of Topgear

Kaycee and Froilan Dytianquin of Mitsubishi

Ferman Lao, Cagi VP for internal affairs, Felix Ang, and Dino Directo, Cagi information officer

Iya, Tonette, and Vinay are all smiles.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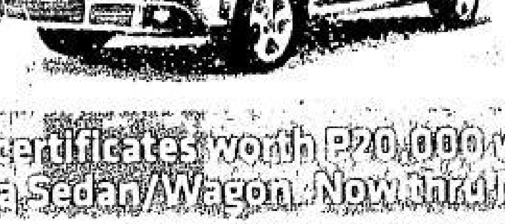

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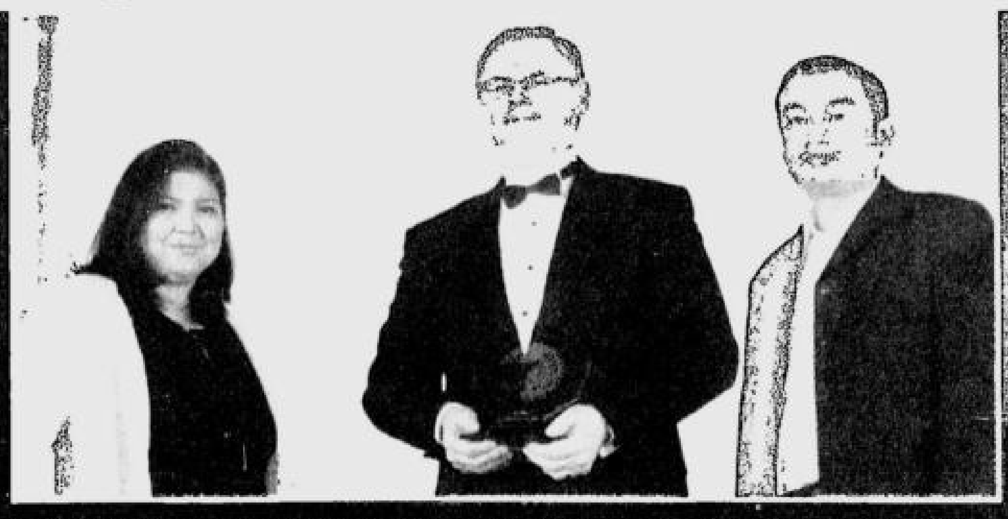
CAGI external VP Andy Sevilla, Elijah Sue Marcial of Toyota Motor Philippines, Cagi treasurer Jeff Reyes. Marcial accepts the Coty Award for the Toyota Camry as the Midsize Car of the Year.



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CAR of the YEAR

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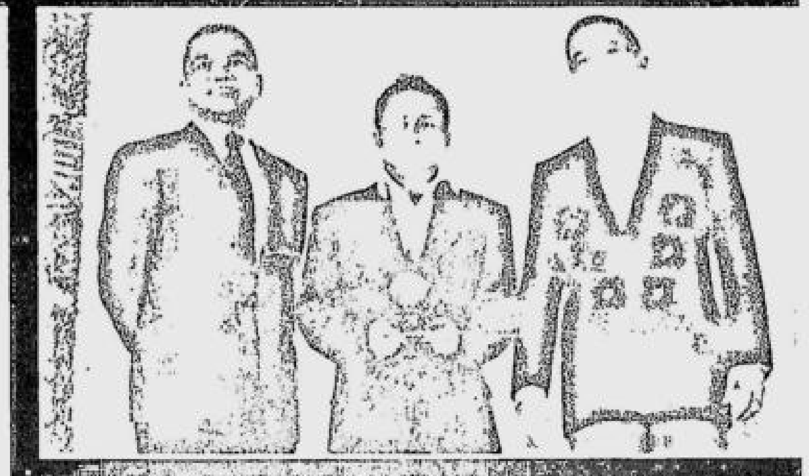

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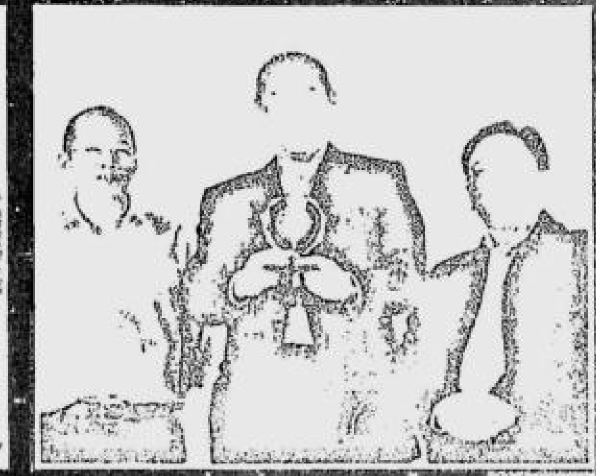

Ferman Lao, Cagi VP for internal affairs, Felix Ang, and Dino Directo, Cagi information officer

lye, Tonette, and Viray are all smiles.

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More sophist[illegible]
The new Optr[illegible]
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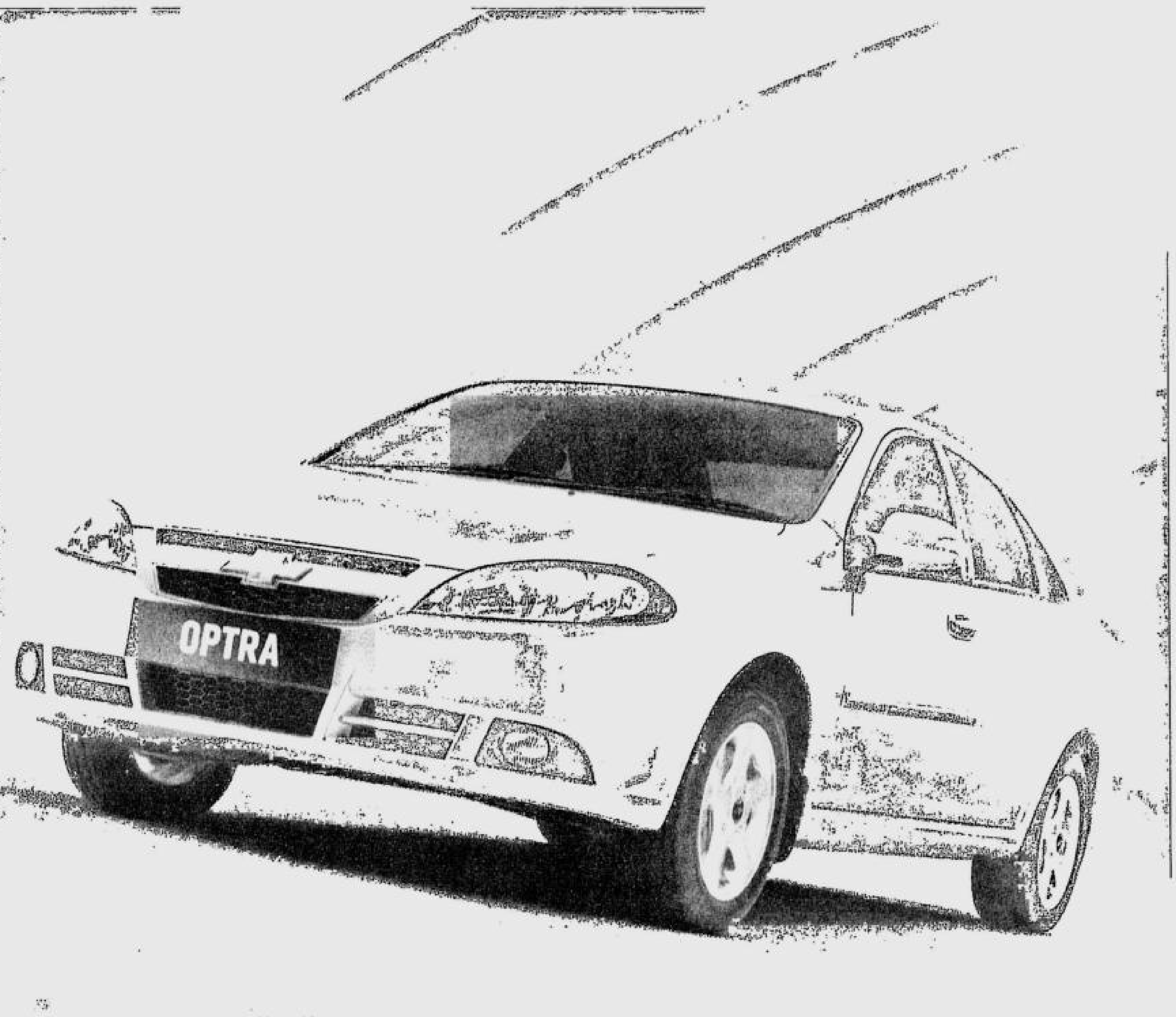

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Volvo, Kia, Subaru and Ford dominate category awards

CAR of the YEAR

Volvo C30 is the Petron 2007 Car of the Year

By Aida Sevilla Mendoza

EVERY YEAR SINCE the Car Awards Group Inc (Cagi) institutionalized the Car of the Year (Coty) Philippines Awards, there have been surprise winners. This year is no exception: the Volvo C30, a luxury sports coupe entered in the Luxury Subcompact Category, won the Petron 2007 Car of the Year Award.

More surprises: After Volvo, which won three category awards aside from the big trophy, Kia garnered four category awards, followed by Subaru and Ford with three each and Honda with two. This outcome reflects an international scope for Coty Philippines since Sweden is Volvo's country of origin, South Korea is Kia's, Japan is Subaru's and Honda's while Ford's is the United States of America.

Top award

The car that bagged the coveted top award was launched in the Philippines only last month. The Volvo C30 2.4L, which has a P1,688,888 suggested retail price, impressed everyone at the Coty testfest at the San Lazaro Leisure Park in Carmona, Cavite with the performance of its 2.4-liter, 5-cylinder DOHC engine, sporty handling, stylish, youthful design and state-of-the-art technology and safety features. (See feature article on the Volvo C30 on page I2).

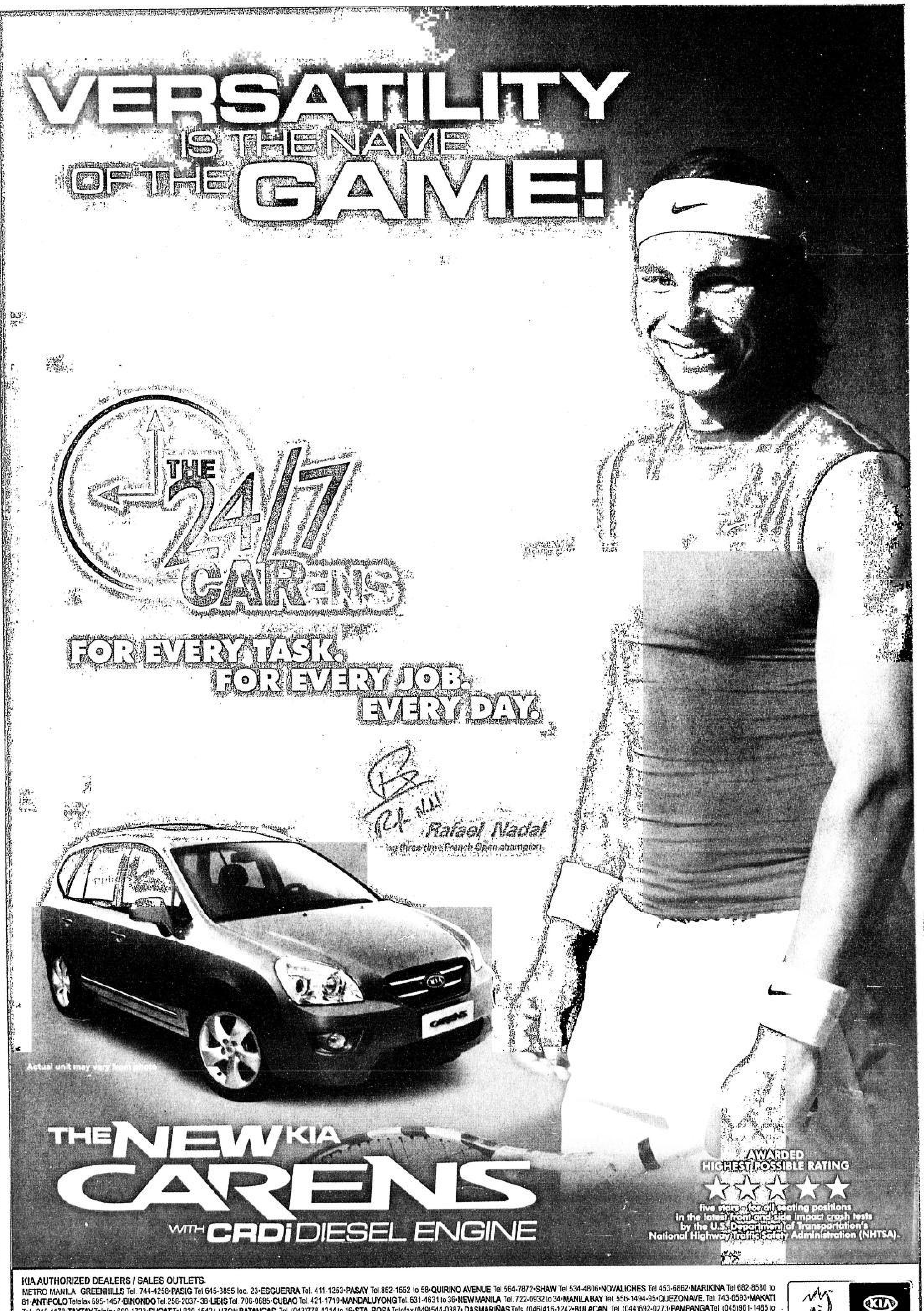
The Volvo C30 was proclaimed at the 4th Coty Awards Night at the Rockwell Tent in Makati City from among 23 best-in-class winners. The Petron 2007 Car of the Year Philippines Award in cooperation with the Automobile Association Philippines (AAP) was conducted by Cagi in partnership with Globe Telecom, Bridgestone, Rockwell Land Corp, the Manila International Auto Show, San Miguel Corp, Standard Insurance Co, Bosch and the San Lazaro Leisure Park.

Concept One, Speed Lab, Makati Skyline, Xenon, H&R, A-Toys Body Kits and Jollibee also sponsored the Petron 2007 Coty Awards program.

23 categories

The 11 categories of the 2006 Coty Awards were expanded to 23 after the 2007 Cagi executive board consulted the Chamber of Automotive Manufac-

VOLVO/3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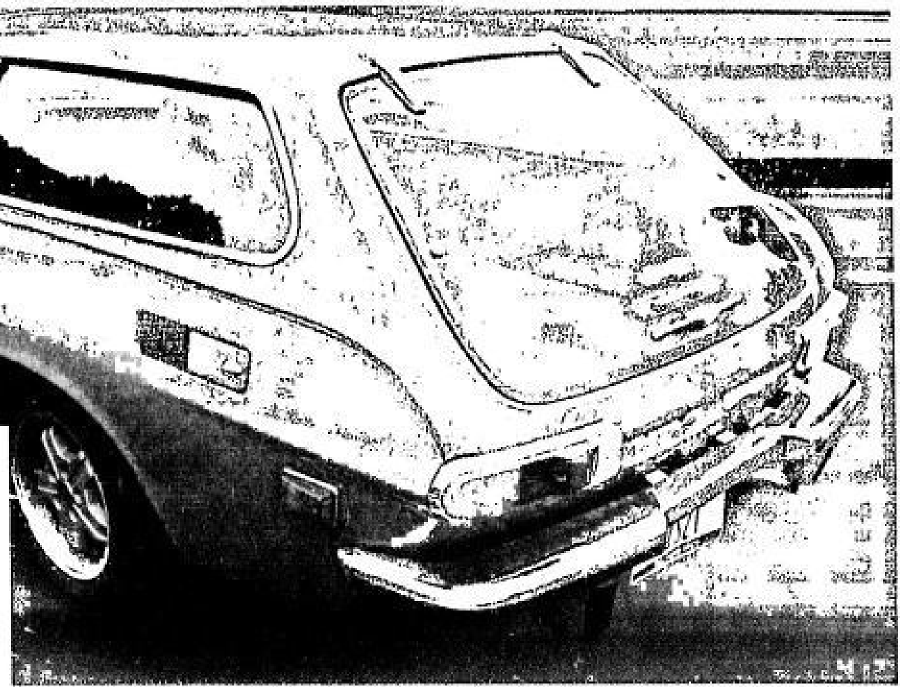
CAR of the YEAR

The surprise 'pocket rocket' entry in the fashionable premium hatch market is also Volvo's most affordable vehicle at just nearly P1.7 million

Dad's car no more



(This story, authored by Coty member Tessa R. Salazar, appeared in the Inquirer's Motoring section Oct. 17)

SOMETIMES, THE GOOD THINGS IN LIFE come in tiny packages, and that less is actually more. Ask Volvo now about its surprise "pocket rocket" entry in the fashionable premium hatch market, and you will get a teensy but pretty sports coup loaded with luxurious amenities.

It's the C30 sports coup , and at a base price of just nearly P1.7 million, it's the least expensive of the Volvo car lineup.

Most fashionable

It's also the most fashionable among the Volvo lineup. One of the designers-Englishman Steve Mattin-once said: "It may be the smallest Volvo but it has the broadest shoulders and the most expressive style. In fact, those rear shoulders are so big that they stretch the limits of what's capable with metal stamping. We could not have gone any bigger."

It may be 22 cm shorter than the erstwhile entry level S40, but its styling may have gone back a long way. Old timers remember the iconic Volvo P1800 ES hatch Roger Moore drove in the old "The Saint" TV series whenever they see the C30, particularly the rear.

The front looks a modern Volvo though-like the S40 or the V50 wagon, but the rear is head-turning. Its all-glass hatch lid has a "plunging" back line. Its taillights are particularly transfixing at night.

C-30 Special Edition

This writer was given the opportunity to drive overnight the C30 Special Edition with a 2.4-liter, 5-cylinder double overhead cam and 17-inch Zaurak wheels. The run started from the rush-hour traffic of Makati and through confusing SLEX widening works, up to the winding, narrow country roads of Tagaytay, and then back.

Does this 2.4-liter ride like the chilly midnight winds of Tagaytay? Well, no. It still felt like a loaded, heavy European car, especially during stop-and-go traffic. The doors for this "strong body" feel heavy despite the car's compact look.

'Third eye'

But the C30 has a "magic" trick up its sleeve. It gives you a "third eye" in your drive. The Blind Spot Information System (a feature standard in this special edition unit), or BLIS, puts rear-facing cameras in the door mirrors that detect vehicles moving in to the driver's blind spot and alert him or her of their presence.

BLIS indicators are installed on the right and left front doors, aligned to where the side-view mirrors are so the driver could easily see the orange indicator lights go on. When orange lights are on, it means vehicles at either the left or right side are approaching. It is a fascinating-and useful-safety addition from a car manufacturer long known for putting vehicle safety at a premium. It certainly aided this writer several times in alerting her of motorcyclists "sneaking" up beside her.

The P1800 ES rear as it looked 35 years ago, top, and given an ultra-modern touch in the new C30, above.

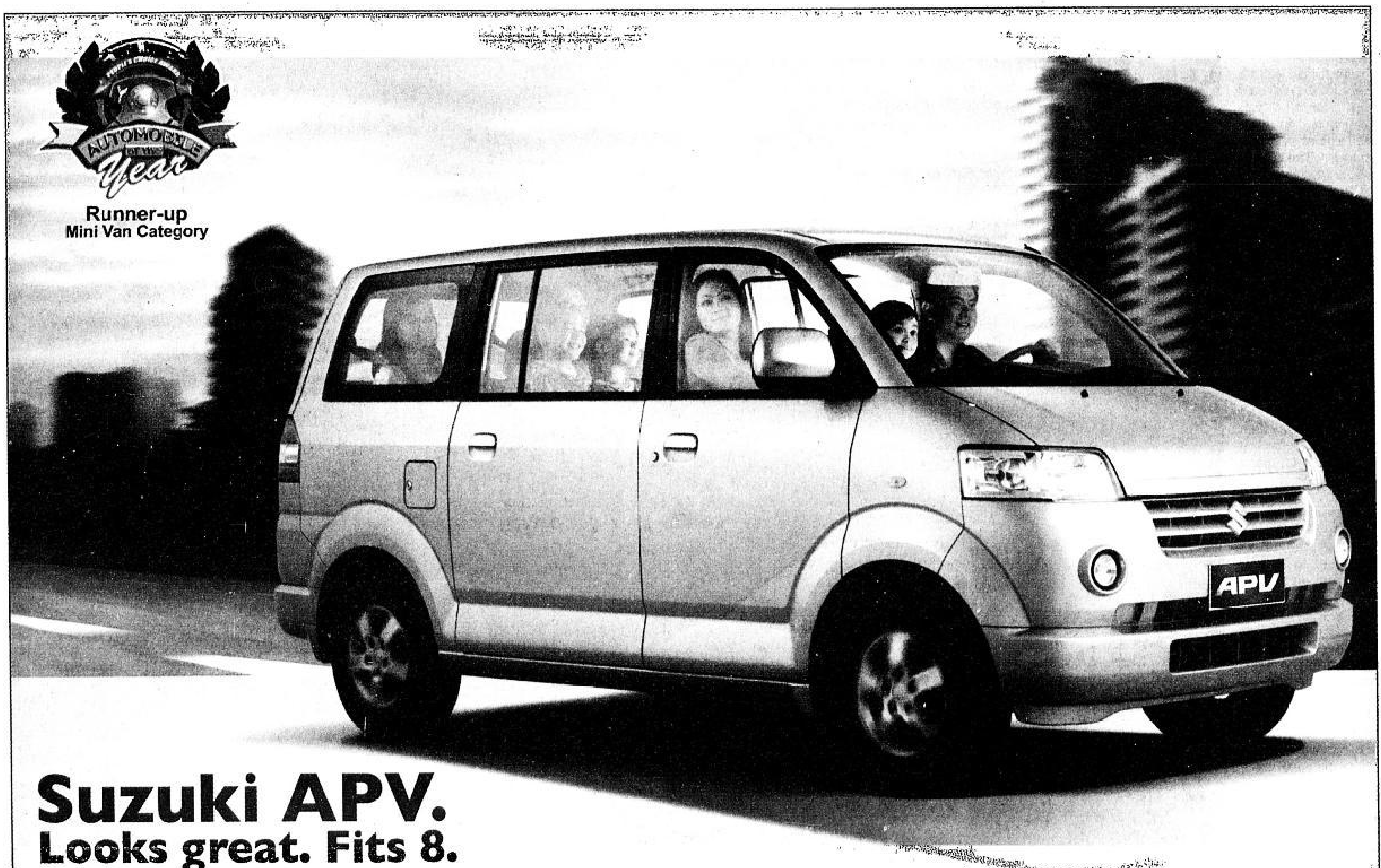
A word of caution, though: Nothing still beats actually looking to your left or right to check for the presence of vehicles before you pass or change lanes.

Besides the other safety standards such as ABS, emergency brake assistance and dynamic stability and traction control you'd expect from a Volvo vehicle, not to mention intelligent airbags with two stages, the C30 also comes equipped with a safety cage and inflatable curtains to help protect occupants' heads.

Power features

Adding to the "loadedness" of the

DAD'S/4



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Volvo C30 is the Petron 2007 Car of the Year

From page 1

turers of the Philippines, Inc (Campi) on how Coty could best reflect changing market conditions and the development of the automotive industry. The Coty Special Awards were increased from four to 19.

Coty choices were based on the results of intensive quantitative and qualitative tests that were conducted over six weekends in September and October by a control group of professional rally drivers using the latest test instruments (in the quantitative tests) and by Cagi members and two AAP directors (in the qualitative tests) at the San Lazaro Leisure Park in Carmona, Cavite. The score sheets of the tests were collated by the Cagi technical committee headed by Ferman Lao and the computations, in turn, were audited by Sycip Gorres Velayo & Co. (SGV) to get the final results. The list of winners was not released nor announced until the Coty Awards Night which this year took place at the Rockwell Tent in Makati Nov. 15.

Consumer-oriented testing

Cagi is an independent, non-profit, non-stock organization of 30 motoring journalists representing more a dozen media outfits. Cagi was organized to conduct a consumer-oriented evaluation of production cars available on the market every year. Aside from providing consumers unbiased and well-researched information on motor vehicles in the market, the Coty Awards program gives recognition to the efforts made by car manufacturers to improve their products and thereby grow the Philippine automotive industry.

. Since its founding in 2004, Cagi has not sought nor accepted financial support or sponsorships from car manufacturers and does not charge an entrance fee for cars to participate in Coty. This year, the C agi executive board invited Petron Corp to be the Coty title sponsor with AAP, the national auto club, as the exclusive technical partner of Coty 2007.

The 2007 Cagi executive board is headed by Ira Panganiban, station manager of RMN Manila DZXL 558, as president; Andy Sevilla, motoring columnist of Business Mirror, as vice president for external affairs; Ferman Lao, technical editor of Top Gear Magazine, as vice president for internal affairs; Robby Consunji, off-road editor of Top Gear, as secretary and Jeff Reyes, advertising executive of The Philippine Star, as treasurer. Armin Amio, founding president of Cagi and editor-in-chief of Gadgets Magazine, heads the board of advisers with past Cagi presidents Manny de los Reyes, editor-in-chief of Speed Magazine and Aida Sevilla Mendoza, motoring columnist of the Philippine Daily Inquirer, as members.

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GLS Sport features:

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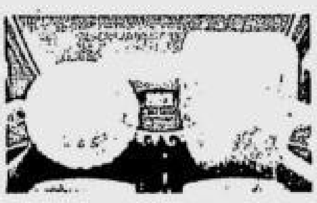
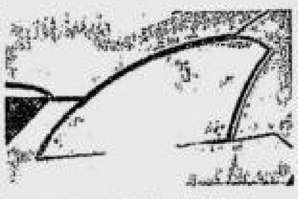
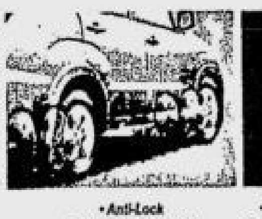
• 2nd Row Center Armrest with Cupholders
• 3rd Row Seats with Fold and Tumble Function (Dealer Option)

• Maroon/Beige Two-Tone with Woodgrain Instrument Panel
• Leather-Wrapped Steering Wheel
• Leather-Wrapped with Wood Accent Gear Shift Lever

• 7" LCD Monitor
• 1-DIN DVD / CD / MP3 / WMA / WAV / Tuner / iPod-Ready (Dealer Option)


Dual SRS Front Airbags


• High Intensity Discharge (HID) Headlamps with Leveler Switch


• Anti-Lock Braking System (ABS) with Electronic Brakeforce Distribution (EBD)

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Petron launches new XCS Complete Combustion System

CLEANER BURN, UNRELENTING power. These are what motorists can expect from the new Petron XCS Complete Combustion System, the first gasoline powered by premium organic combustion enhancers.

The Complete Combustion System in the new Petron XCS is a breakthrough additive technology that works on the vehicle's entire fuel system to produce significantly improved performance in power, fuel economy, and exhaust emissions.

Made from natural materials, the organic combustion enhancer is a special additive that creates a catalytic reaction to produce a more complete burn.

Petron pioneered in cleaning additives when it introduced the XCS with the Xtra Cleaning formulation in 1996-the first such formulation in the Philippines. In 2000, with the shift to unleaded gasoline and fuel-injection systems, Petron XCS Plus was again the first to introduce Valvemaster, a recession and engine-protection additive. And this year, Petron sets a new standard in fuel with the breakthrough gasoline, the new Petron

XCS Complete Combustion System.

As the industry leader in gasoline cleaning additives, Petron has long known that deposits in the fuel system tend to disrupt fuel flow resulting in power loss. But while other local players are only now introducing their own versions of "cleaning" gasoline, the new Petron XCS Complete Combustion System uses one of the most advanced additive formulations not only in the Philippines but worldwide.

The patented organic additive in the new Petron XCS has superior detergent qualities, which remove the deposits accumulated in the fuel system and prevents new deposits from forming, thus unleashing the maximum power of the engine.

Moreover, unlike other fuel blends, the new Petron XCS Complete Combustion System cleans not just the engine but the entire fuel system, from the tank to the fuel pump to the fuel hose, to the engine up to the tailpipe of your car. Developed with Innospec, a global leader in fuel additives technology, the formulation of the new Petron XCS is the first of its kind worldwide-after lengthy research and certification from internationally renowned laboratories.

Motorists will also be delighted with the instant improvements they can experience from the new Petron XCS Complete Combustion System, which begins to work as soon as you gas up, with a one-tank clean-up guaranteed. Continuous use of the new Petron XCS will benefit both new and old vehicle owners. It prevents deposits from forming in the fuel system of new cars for optimum engine performance. In older vehicles, it removes existing deposits in the fuel system for smoother response, better power generation, and improved fuel efficiency.

Truly unparalleled, the new Petron XCS Complete Combustion System is an environment-friendly 95-octane premium gasoline specially developed for Philippine driving conditions.

PETRON
Fuel Success.

Petron president Khalid Al-Faddagh announces the introduction of the new Petron XCS Complete Combustion System.

Dad's car no more

From page 2

C30 are a bevy of power features: power front seats for entry and exit of rear passengers; front seats with memory for three separate settings; power sunroof, cruise controls, bluetooth hands-free system, rain sensor, park assist (rear sensors) and bi-xenon headlights.

And when you get to feel the interior - the ceiling, seats, side door panels and the dashboard-you know Volvo did not scrimp on materials. The fabrics are not cheap. Volvo boasts that its upholstery and textiles comply with the international Oeko Tex Standard 100, ensuring the materials used have been tested against certain allergies and harmful substances. Interior metal details such as the key, door handles and safety belt buckles comply with the safety standards for nickel leaks as high-quality jewelry (according to the spec sheet).

Its two full-sized rear seats have a folding armrest to enhance, as the designer put it, "the lounge effect."

Firm ride

The ride is firm but not stiff. Though the C30 was designed to carry just four adults, this writer tried to squeeze in four small- to medium-sized companions during the trip. Well, what could she say? They actually fit (That's the Pinoy "jeepney" mentality for you, making use of every available space). But this was just a short trip. Long drives in such cramped quarters are not recommended.

For good measure, this C30 was tested on unpaved roads as well-on the narrow country trail in Silang, Cavite, leading to the Ilog Maria Honey Bee farm. The C30's heaviness in these conditions was reassuring.

Young urbanites with active lifestyles will almost surely consider the C30 among their options. And with optional additions-like load carriers, roof boxes, surfboard or bicycle racks, and an i-Pod adaptable audio system-to complete the look, sound and feel, there's really no rush to reach the destination that quickly. Sure and safe can be a bit of fun, too.

What is Coty?

THE CAR OF THE YEAR AWARDS IS an annual event done in countries like Australia, China, France, Japan, Italy, Germany and North America. The Philippine version is the Car Awards Group's Car of the Year awards.

Journalists representing 26 media outfits have banded together to put up Car of the Year Philippines. This group of journalists, collectively known as the Car Awards Group Inc (non-stock, non-profit), endeavors to institutionalize the Car of the Year Philippines project in an effort to serve as the beacon and public advocate in this very dynamic industry.

Cagi holds Coty in partnership with the Automobile Association Philippines (AAP), the country's national car club.

Objectives:

- Improve the skills of motoring journalists in the Philippines by providing a venue to test automobiles using quantitative and qualitative standards.
- Set new benchmarks for the domestic automotive industry in terms of design, innovation, safety and handling.
- Increase camaraderie among Philippine motoring journalists.

Vision

To be a cumulative voice in setting new standards for the automotive industry.

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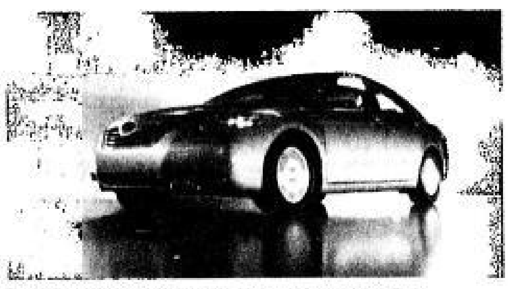
Winners' gallery

The real stars of the show, of course, are the cars themselves. And this year, the stars represent a truly international cast.

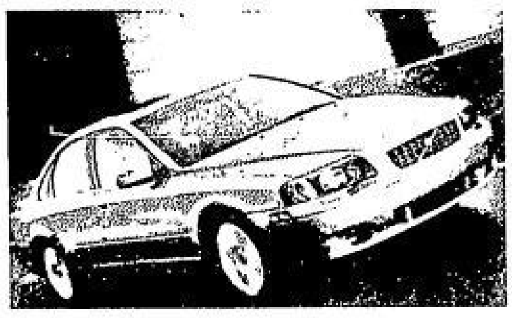
2007 Petron Car of the Year and Luxury Subcompact of the Year: Volvo C30

Basic Subcompact of the Year: Kia Picanto 1.1 DLX



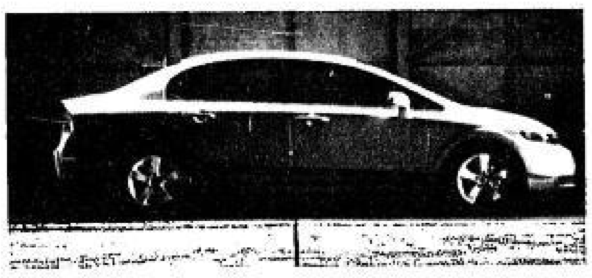
Midsize Car of the Year: Toyota Camry

Luxury Car of the Year: Volvo S80 2.5L



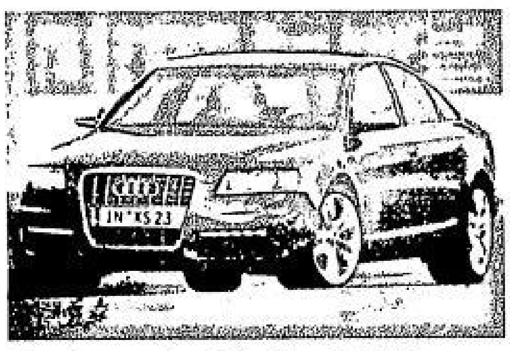
Sports Car of the Year: Subaru Impreza 2.5 WRX

Executive Subcompact of the Year: Kia Rio 1.4 sedan

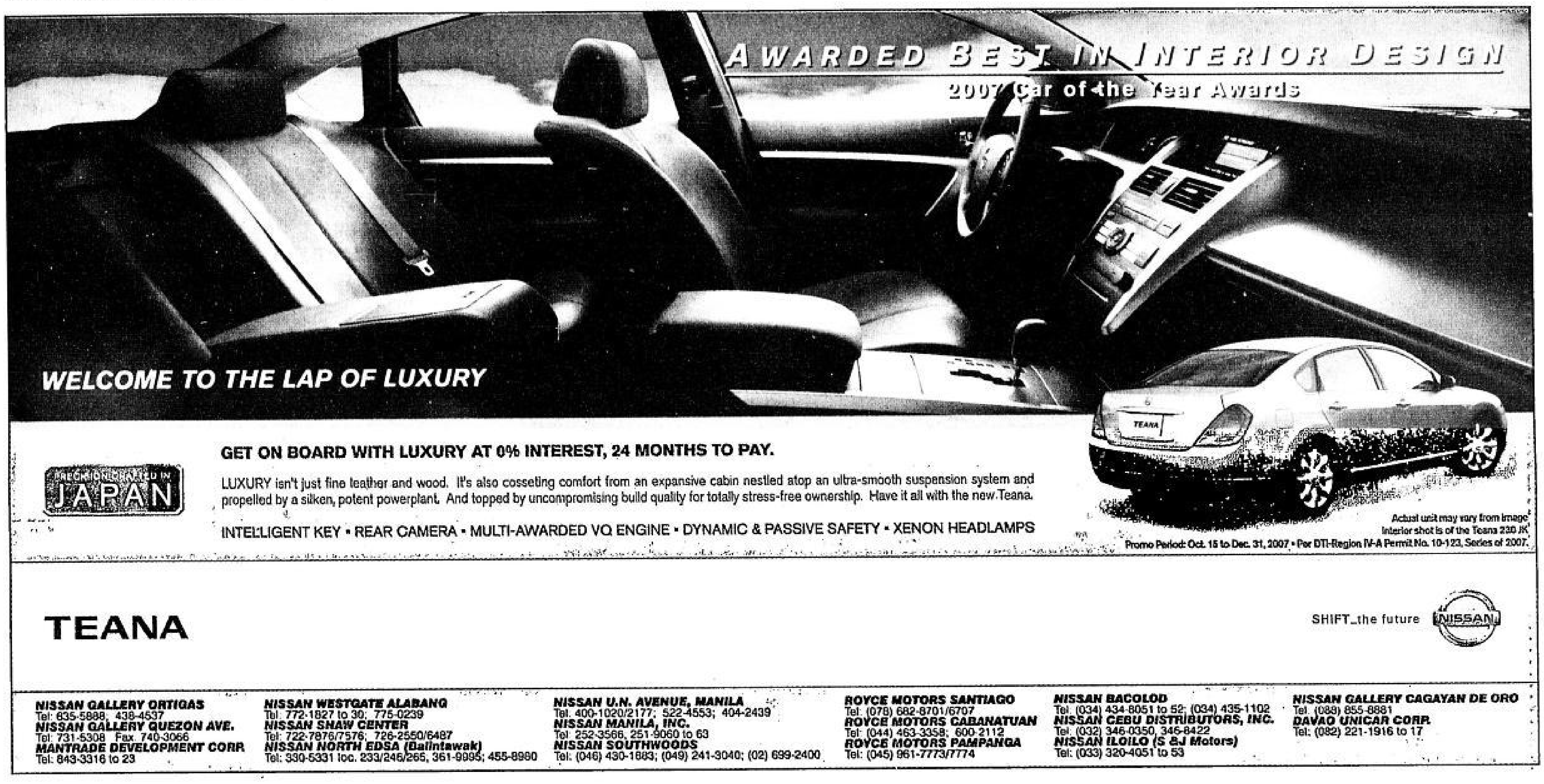


Compact Car of the Year: Honda Civic 1.8 AT

Executive Car of the Year: Volvo S60 T5



Ultra Luxury Car of the Year: Audi A6



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2007 Car of the Year Awards

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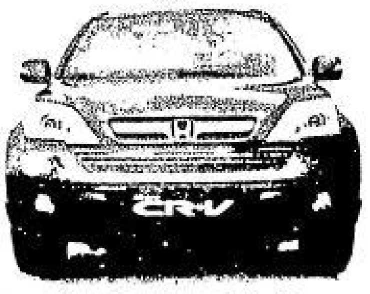
Winners' gallery



2 WD Crossover / Wagon of the Year: Honda CR-V 2.0 MT

4WD Crossover/ Wagon of the Year: Subaru Forester 2.5 XT

Ultra Luxury Crossover/ Wagon of the Year: BMW X5

Luxury Crossover/ Wagon of the Year: Subaru Outback 3.0 R

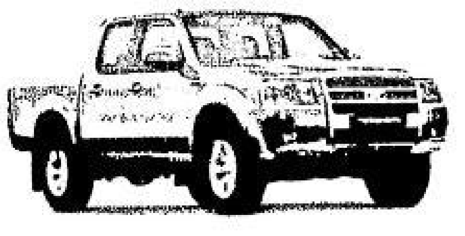
Compact Van/ Multipurpose Vehicle of the Year: Kia Carens CRDi

Executive Van/ MPV of the Year: Kia Carnival 2.9 LX CRDi Short Wheelbase

Luxury Van/ MPV of the Year: Hyundai Starex

Ultra Luxury Van/ MPV of the Year: Chrysler Town & Country

2WD Pickup of the Year: Ford Ranger 4x2

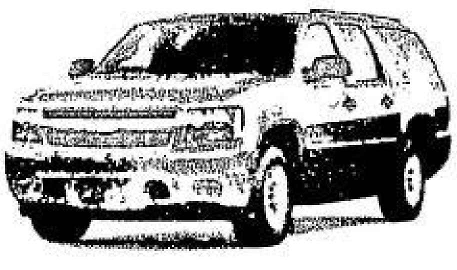


4WD Pickup of the Year: Ford Ranger 4x4

Compact Sport Utility Vehicle of the Year: Suzuki Grand Vitara

Executive SUV of the Year: Ford Everest 4x2

Luxury SUV of the Year: Mitsubishi Endeavor



Ultra Luxury SUV of the Year: Chevrolet Suburban

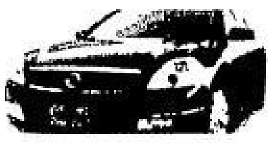
Special Awards:

The members of CAGI voted the following for the 19 Special Awards:

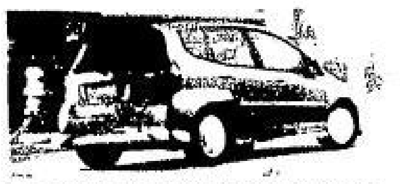
AAP BEST ROAD SAFETY CAMPAIGN: TOYOTA MOTORS PHILIPPINES

STANDARD INSURANCE BEST SAFETY PACKAGE: VOLVO S80 T5

MOST PREFERRED SECURITY VEHICLE: CHEVROLET SUBURBAN



Rockwell Land Best Interior Design: Nissan Teana



Speed Lab Tuner's Choice Award: Honda Jazz

BEST TECHNICAL INNOVATION: AUDI TDI

GLOBE MEDIA DREAM CAR: SUBARU IMPREZA WRX

CONCEPT ONE SEXIEST CAR: VOLVO C30

BOSCH BEST IN-CAR ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM: MITSUBISHI OUTLANDER

STANDARD INSURANCE BEST VALUE FOR MONEY: HONDA JAZZ 1.3

BEST MARKETING CAMPAIGN: HYUNDAI

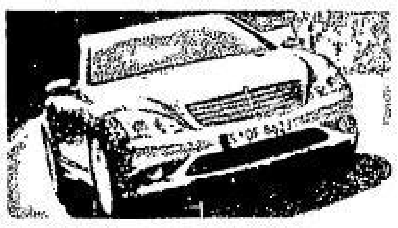
BEST MEDIA EVENT: TOYOTA ROAD TREK

CONCEPT ONE BEST MEDIA LAUNCH: ISUZU D-MAX METAL TO THE PEDAL

BRIDGESTONE BEST OFF-ROAD VEHICLE: FORD RANGER 4X4

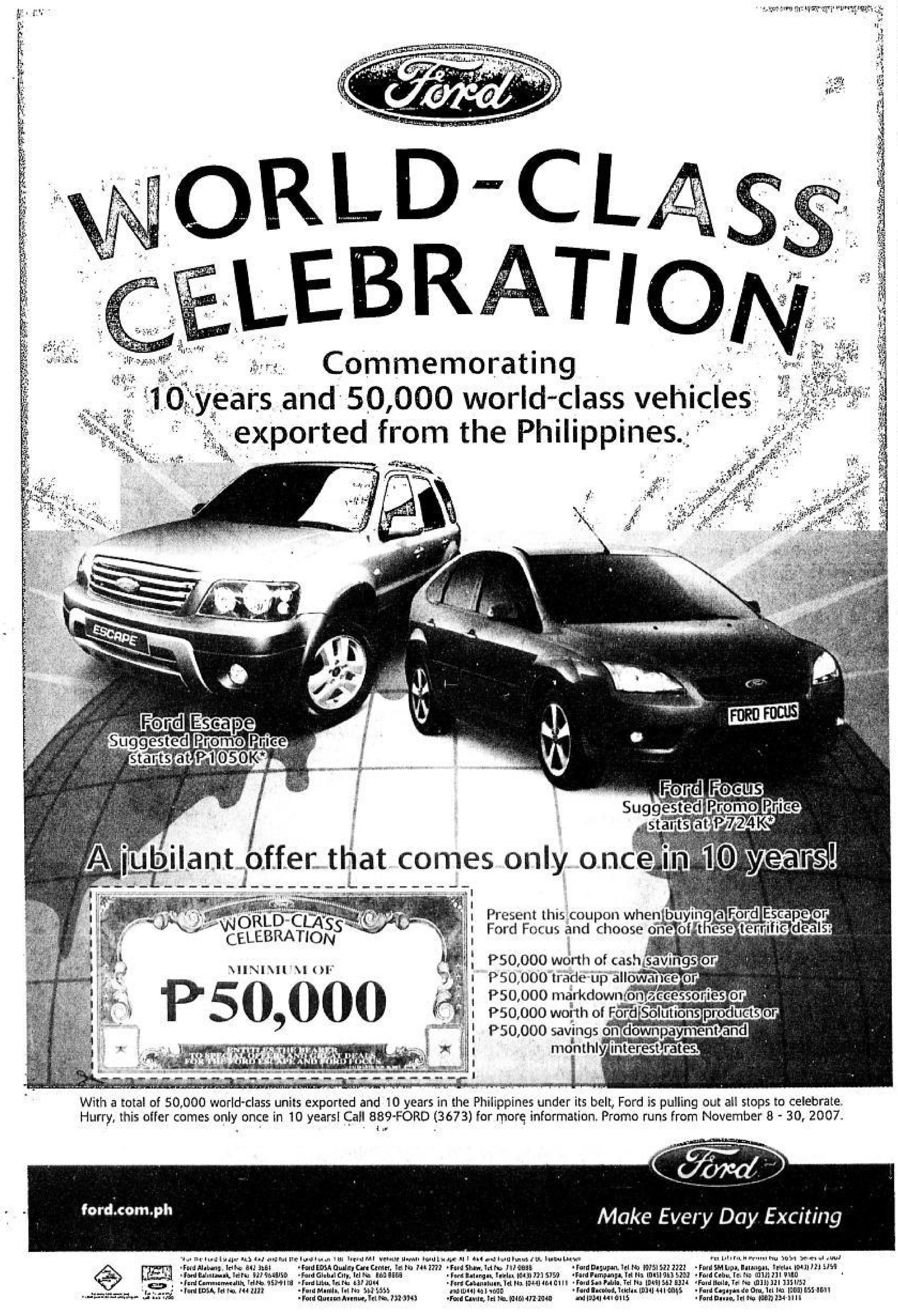
Manila Jockey Club Best Exterior Design: Audi Q7

Best for Business Vehicle: Isuzu Crosswind Sportivo



Bridgestone Most Comfortable Ride: Mercedes-Benz S350

Best-Looking Utility Vehicle: Mitsubishi Strada



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The all-new Kia Carnival – reliable multi-player

ALREADY A POPULAR CHOICE for buyers looking for value, quality and safety, the completely redesigned Carnival (Sedona) MPV offers more horsepower than its predecessor and is substantially larger in all key dimensions, providing more passenger room and versatility. New features found on the all-new Carnival include a standard fold-flat-into-the-floor third-row seat and power-sliding doors and liftgate.

Utilizing an all-new platform, the new Carnival's longer wheelbase and increased length and width contribute to the MPV's nearly 15 percent improvement in passenger room over its predecessor. Fresh styling cues and additional standard and available equipment were designed to bolster the Carnival's established position as a safety and value leader in the highly competitive MPV market.

Since its introduction in 2001, the Carnival has quickly gained recognition for its tremendous value and generous list of standard comfort, convenience and safety features. In addition to earning the U.S. federal government's highest safety ratings (Five Stars) for the driver and front and rear-seat passengers in both frontal and side impact crash tests, the Carnival has compiled an impressive list of accolades.

Safety First

Serving as Kia's flagship safety vehicle, the all-new Carnival continues to blaze the roadmap set forth by its predecessor, by earning the "Gold Top Safety Pick" for its impressive performance with top ratings in frontal, side and rear impact crash tests by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) in the U.S.

In order to receive a Gold Top Safety Pick rating from IIHS, the vehicle must receive a "Good" - the Institute's highest rating - in all three categories of frontal, side and rear impact tests. Among the eight current minivan designs the Institute has rated, the Carnival is the only one that earns "good" ratings in all three Institute's tests.

"The Carnival is the best minivan we've tested," said IIHS President Adrian Lund. "Other minivans have earned good frontal and side ratings, but they haven't achieved a satisfactory level of rear crash protection. The Carnival stands out as the first to get a clean sweep of good ratings across the board."

The new generation Carnival continues Kia's commitment to offer high levels of standard safety equipment. Sensors controlling the front supplemental restraints, for instance, determine the position of the seat, whether the seat belt is buckled, whether the front passenger seat is occupied, and the severity of a frontal impact before deployment.

A four-channel, four sensor, anti-lock brake system (ABS) is also standard. This system incorporates electronic brake force distribution (EBD), which helps to distribute braking force to all four wheels in proportion to weight shifts during cornering. The EBD adapts to individual grip conditions, which helps to improve both control and stability.

Additional safety equipment include a tire pressure monitoring system and active front seat headrests, while features such as an electronic stability program (ESP) and a traction control system (TCS) with brake assist are available as options.

Enhanced Performance

With increase horsepower and torque, the all-new Carnival offers competitive power and performance in the MPV segment. A 2.9 L, DOHC, 16 valve, Turbo intercooler, CRDi (Common Rail Direct Injection) Diesel engine has been incorporated providing 160 horse power and 35.0 Kg-m of torque. Mated to a five-speed Sportmatic ™ transmission.

Despite its increase in size, the new Carnival is significantly lighter than the previous model on an equally equipped basis. With more power, less weight and a new chassis with 4-wheel independent suspension, the new generation Carnival is designed for a more rewarding drive than its predecessor and competitors.

The new Carnival's four-wheel independent suspension is comprised of MacPherson struts with coil springs and a stabilizer bar in the front, while the rear suspension uses a multi-link design with coil springs and a stabilizer bar.

Stopping power has increased with the addition of a power-assisted four-wheel-disc braking system with larger diameter vented front disc brakes (11.7-in.) and solid rear disc brakes (11.9-in.)

Carnival models come with larger wheels and tires, including 16-inch steel wheels and 225/70 R16 tires or 17 inch alloy wheels fitted to 235/60 R17 tires.

Spacious, adaptable and comfortable

Competitively sized, the new seven-passenger Carnival's generous dimensions and unibody construction boost both passenger and luggage space, and greatly improved ride and handling.

Adding to the Carnival's space and versatility, flip and fold second row seats provide easy access to third row seating and a new, simple-to-operate 60/40 split-folding into-the-floor third row seat is standard on all models to create a larger flat cargo area when the seat is deployed.

Available in two trim models - LX and EX - the all-new Carnival maintains Kia's tradition of offering high-value with its generous list standard features and amenities.